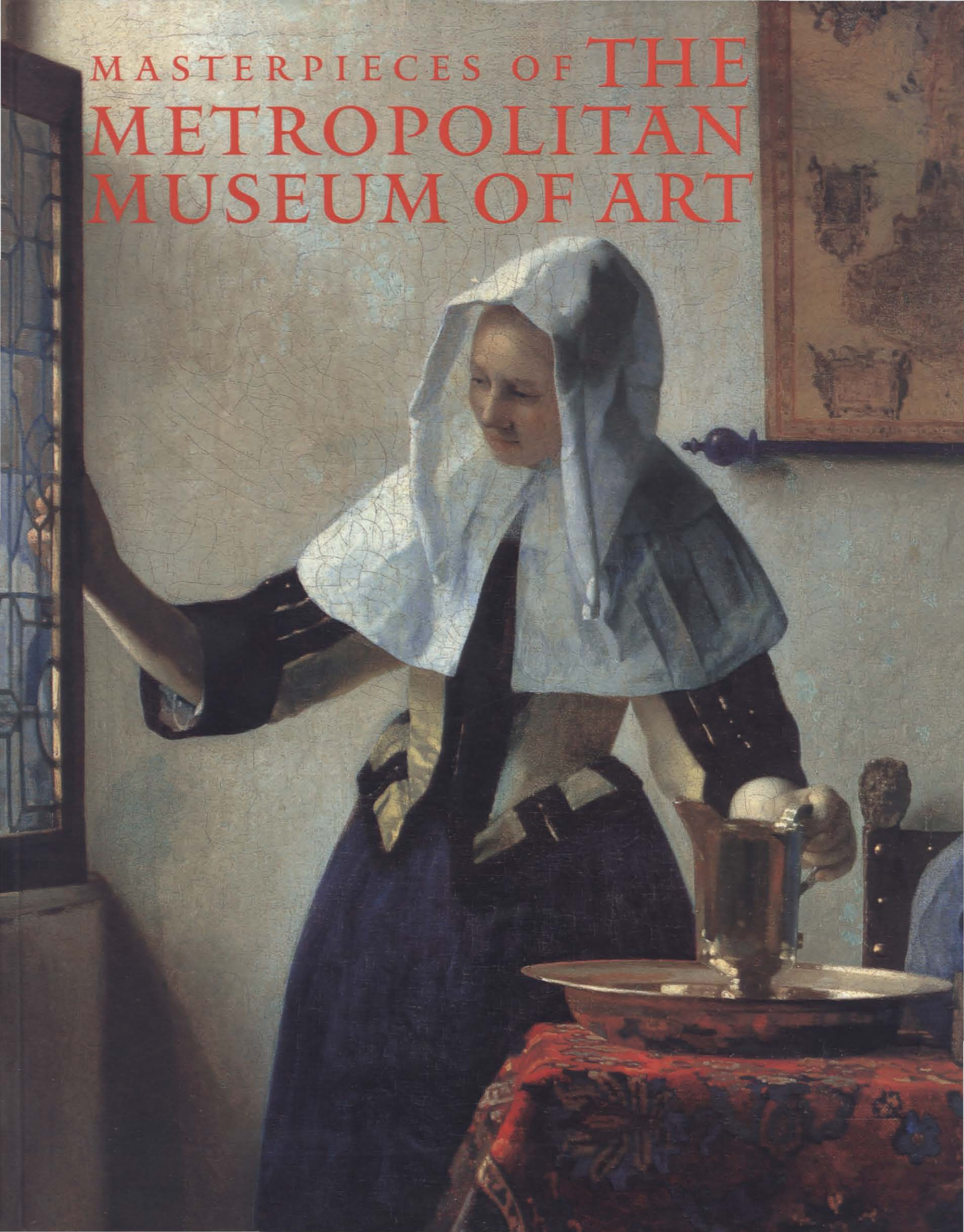


MASTERPIECES OF THE
METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM OF ART



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MASTERPIECES OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

Introduction by Philippe de Montebello

Edited by Barbara Burn

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK

YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS, NEW HAVEN AND LONDON

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Revised edition, 1997

Fifth printing, 2006

Published by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Editor in Chief, John P. O'Neill

Project Coordinator / Editor, Barbara Burn, with the assistance of Ellisa Whitley

Designer, Abby Goldstein

Production Manager, Gwen Roginsky

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Masterpieces of the Metropolitan Museum of Art / introduction by

Philippe de Montebello; edited by Barbara Burn.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-87099-849-8.—ISBN 0-300-10615-7 (Yale)

1. Art—New York (N.Y.)—Catalogs. 2. Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.)—Catalogs. I. Burn, Barbara, 1940–

N610.A6742 1993

708.147'1—dc20

93-7966

CIP

The chapter texts and captions for this book are the product of many hands, but the following individuals in and outside the Museum were major contributors, and we are especially grateful to them: Dorothea Arnold, Joan Aruz, Richard Barnhart, Peter Dorman, Kate Ezra, Everett Fahy, Mark D. Greenberg, Prudence O. Harper, Frederick Hartt, Kathleen Howard, Julie Jones, William Lieberman, J. Patrice Marandel, Joan Mertens, Douglas Newton, Josephine Novak, Lucy A. O'Brian, John P. O'Neill, Oswaldo Rodriguez Roque, James Snyder, John T. Spike, and Stuart Cary Welch. The editor is also grateful to Barbara Cavaliere, Joan Holt, Brian Hotchkiss, Steffie Kaplan, Carol Judy Leslie, Helen Watt, and Eng Wong for their help.

The photographs in this volume were taken by The Photograph Studio, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, with the exception of the following: pages 157, 192–93, Sheldan Collins; page 316 (above), Mark Darley; page 175, Lynton Gardiner; pages 23, 37, 45, 51, 54 (below), 55, 78 (below left and right), 86, 90–91, 109, 114, 173, 180, 187, 203, 213, 223, 224, 269, 272, 274, 277 (below), 281, Schecter Lee; page 317, Neil Selkirk; frontispiece, pages 58, 175, 176–77, Malcolm Varon; page 249 (above and below), Paul Warchol; page 17, Bruce White.

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Cover: Johannes Vermeer, Dutch, *Young Woman with a Water Jug*, early 1660s (see pages 137, 139)

Frontispiece: Detail of *Emperor Ming-huang's Flight to Shu*, Chinese, Southern Sung dynasty, 12th century (see pages 178–79)

Typeset by The Sarabande Press, New York

Printed and bound by Mondadori Printing S.p.A., Verona, Italy

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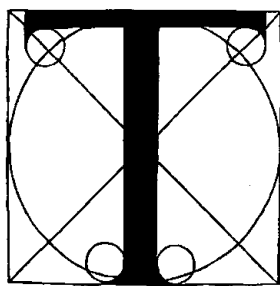
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Introduction



THE HISTORY OF The Metropolitan Museum of Art can be told in many ways—as the evolution of a vast cultural institution that has become New York City’s most popular tourist attraction; as an architectural palimpsest that has grown and changed over the years to house its collections of nearly three million objects; as the story of personalities that have conspired, clashed, and cooperated with one other to establish the most comprehensive art museum in the Western

Hemisphere. All of these stories make fascinating reading and have, in fact, been the basis of several publications.

The purpose of this book is not to retell history but to present in one volume a selection of the works of art that are, after all, the Museum’s *raison d’être*. In 1905 the trustees issued a statement stipulating that in future the goal of the Metropolitan Museum would be “to group together the masterpieces of different countries and times in such relation and sequence as to illustrate the history of art in the broadest sense.” It is in that spirit that this publication, the most recent in a long series of “masterpiece” books based on the Museum’s holdings, is presented.

Selecting one tenth of one percent of the Museum’s collection for this book was not an easy task, but it was a necessary one. A format designed to provide a pleasurable visual experience for the reader can accommodate only a few objects; anything more would be exhausting. Many visitors to the Museum realize that, after only two or three hours of intensive gazing, they simply cannot absorb another work of art.

In an institution as wide-ranging as the Metropolitan, it would have been easy to choose three hundred masterpieces from the Department of European Paintings alone. But such a publication, as beautiful as it might be, would ignore the resources of seventeen other departments in the Museum. The American Wing, for example, houses the world’s most comprehensive collection of American paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts, including twenty-four period rooms. The Egyptian holdings in the adjoining wing are vast, thanks to the Museum’s own archaeological expeditions, as well as generous gifts and discerning purchases, with about thirty-six thousand objects, including many treasures that have not even yet appeared in print. On the floor below the Egyptian galleries is the Costume Institute, a repository of many thousands of costumes that are stored in cabinets or lie carefully folded in drawers, seen only occasionally by scholars because of their fragility. The same precautions are taken with drawings, prints, photographs, and other works on paper that must be kept safe from the damaging effects of light, humidity, and other environmental conditions. These objects are occasionally put on public view, but only for brief periods of time and on a rotating basis.

I was tempted in preparing this book to choose masterpieces that are less well known to the general public, rather than the “warhorses” that the Museum’s audience expects. How delightful it would be to reproduce for the first time in full color a magnificent watercolor by Delacroix or a tiny Assyrian cylinder seal. But that is a better idea for a second volume. Leaving out Goya’s portrait of Don Manuel Osorio or Rembrandt’s *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer* would both annoy and puzzle those who come regularly to the Museum to see those old favorites and would wish to have them in a book at home. And it is true that the works in this volume are among the greatest treasures we have.

Picking only two Vermeers from the Museum's five, when the oeuvre of the master includes fewer than forty paintings, is in fact a task more pleasurable than difficult.

A true measure of the Museum's scope is the fact that while this book does not present a complete and balanced history of art, nearly every culture and period are well represented by objects of the highest quality. We have not organized the book by curatorial departments, as we did the Museum's guide book, but by cultures, with the works arranged chronologically, so that the reader may be led logically through the history of human artistic accomplishment. Appearing alongside paintings and sculpture are works of decorative art, such as ceramics, tapestries, arms and armor, musical instruments, costumes, and great pieces of furniture.

Thousands of words of exacting scholarship have honored the works of art reproduced in this book, and the brief descriptions that appear here can only hint at what we know of them. But scholarship is a continuing process, and ideas about artists and the works they create are constantly being challenged and revised or replaced. The information presented in this book is the result of a vast collaborative effort on the part of the Museum's curatorial staff members, who have over the years studied, researched, and written about the objects in their care. I am grateful to them all for having reviewed yet again the material compiled to document the images you see here.

A final word of gratitude must go to those whose names you see on every page of this book in what we refer to as credit lines, which accompany each object. These are the names of the donors who have made possible the acquisition of the masterpieces in the Museum, either by having collected and donated the works or by having given funds for purchases. The incredible energy and drive that propelled these men and women to gather up the world's great works of art is honored in the subtext of our credit lines. The names of such individuals as J. P. Morgan, Benjamin Altman, Jules Bache, H. O. and Louisine Havemeyer, Stephen C. Clark, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Philip and Robert Lehman, Nelson A. Rockefeller, C. Douglas Dillon, Charles and Jayne Wrightsman, and the Honorable Walter C. Annenberg tell the history of American collecting.

No less important to our history has been the long line of generous donors of funds that enable our curators to purchase objects for the Museum. Many of these individuals have been members of the Board of Trustees or staff members, collectors in their own right. A silver Cypriot bowl in the chapter on Greek and Roman art, for example, entered the Museum only four years after its founding, in 1874, from the collection of the Museum's first paid director, Louis P. di Cesnola. Others have been little known in the art world except for their financial support of the Museum. Jacob Rogers, a New Jersey businessman, established a fund in 1910 that continues to be an important resource today. The credit lines reading simply "Rogers Fund" are perhaps the most numerous in this book.

Although times are difficult today, and many of the incentives for donating works and funds to public institutions are less than compelling, there are still masterpieces to be found. It is a tribute to the energy and drive of the Museum's curatorial staff and to the unwavering support of its supporters that a number of works in this book are very recent additions to the Museum's holdings, such as a brilliant Turkish sword (page 78) and a major painting by Lucien Freud that entered the collection early in 1993.

But this book is not about the collectors or the curators or the history of the Museum's acquisitions. It is about the works of art, presented, as the trustees once dictated, "in such relation and sequence as to illustrate the history of art in the broadest sense." And it is with great pleasure that I let the works now speak for themselves.

Philippe de Montebello
Director

THE ANCIENT WORLD





Egypt



ACCORDING TO ANCIENT MYTHS, Upper and Lower Egypt were united by Menes, the king from whom thirty dynasties of Egyptian monarchs would claim descent. Historically, a unified and centralized state existed in Egypt from about 3100 B.C. The seat of royal power was located in the northern city of Memphis during the Old Kingdom, the period when the impressive pyramids at Giza were built to enshrine the majesty of the deceased rulers. Owing to the disintegration

of central authority and to economic crisis, the Old Kingdom collapsed in about 2130 B.C. There followed a time of political fragmentation, the First Intermediate Period, which lasted for about a hundred years, after which Mentuhotep II of the Eleventh Dynasty reunified the kingdom from his capital at Thebes in the south. Egypt regained its prosperity during the Middle Kingdom (about 2040–1650 B.C.) under the powerful rulers of the Twelfth Dynasty (Amenemhat I, Senwosret I, Senwosret III, and Amenemhat III). During the Second Intermediate Period (about 1650–1550 B.C.), which followed the end of the Thirteenth Dynasty, Egypt was dominated essentially by foreign rulers of Asiatic origin (the “Hyksos”). In about 1550 B.C., the expulsion of the Hyksos inaugurated the New Kingdom, during which Egypt experienced the period of its greatest military strength, territorial expansion, and material prosperity. The last great pharaoh of the New Kingdom was Ramesses III (about 1184–1153 B.C.), but Egypt’s military and economic decline had begun, and by 1075 B.C., Egypt was effectively split in two. The Late Period (712–332 B.C.) saw a substantial influx of foreign settlers, including Syrians, Jews, and Greeks, and the Egyptians turned to their own past to revive earlier traditions in religion and the arts. In 332 B.C. Egypt was conquered by Alexander the Great, and when his short-lived empire came apart at his death in 323, Egypt was claimed by one of his generals, Ptolemy, who became the first of thirteen Ptolemaic kings. Ptolemaic Egypt became part of the Roman Empire after the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C.

The qualities that characterize the art of ancient Egypt—such as rigidity of pose and the use of contradictory perspectives in portraying the human figure—remained consistent for the greater part of Egyptian history. They originated in the Early Dynastic Period (about 3000 B.C.) and still exerted a powerful influence long after the conquest of Egypt, first by Persia, then by Macedonia, and finally by Rome. Significant differences appear from period to period, but the reasons why a consistent aesthetic endured for some three thousand years lie in the Egyptian conceptions of time and space, which can be linked significantly with the physical setting that gave birth to one of the most splendid civilizations of the ancient world: the Nile Valley.

The annual succession of the agricultural seasons was marked by the slow but ordered progression of stars and constellations, punctuated by the movements of the sun and moon. The concepts of divine kingship and right order (Egyptian: *Maat*) reflected the same pattern of never-ending cyclical renewal. In such a world, reassurance was found in the repetitiveness of life. The unusual or the unpredictable would introduce an unwelcome note of chaos into a well-ordered universe. In religion, art, politics, and social behavior, moderation and constancy were the supreme virtues, since these recalled the perfection of the world at “the time of the god,” the moment of creation.

(OVERLEAF)

Dynasty 18, ca. 1391–1353 B.C.

AMENHOTEP III

Quartzite; H. 13¾ in. (35 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1956 (56.138)

This great example of New Kingdom sculpture emphasizes beautiful youth in a pharaoh who ruled Egypt at the pinnacle of its political power and economic prosperity and was a great builder and patron of the arts.

(OPPOSITE)

Dynasty 12, ca. 1929–1878 B.C.

RITUAL FIGURE

Gessoed and painted wood; H. 22⅞ in.

(58.1 cm)

Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1914 (14.3.17)

This statuette, a masterpiece of ancient Egyptian wood carving, was found by the Museum’s excavators in a high official’s funerary precinct at Lisht, along with a companion piece now in Cairo. Both figures wear royal crowns and show the facial features of the reigning king.

(LEFT)

Dynasty 12, ca. 1890–1880 B.C.

PECTORAL WITH THE NAME OF SENWOSRET II

Gold, amethyst, turquoise, feldspar, carnelian, lapis lazuli, and garnet;

H. 1¾ in. (4.5 cm)

Purchase, Rogers Fund, and Henry Walters Gift, 1916 (16.1.3)

This pectoral, found in the tomb of Princess Sithathoryunet, is a masterpiece of goldworking and lapidary craftsmanship. The princess’s treasure includes some of the finest pieces of royal jewelry preserved from the Middle Kingdom, a period of Egyptian history unsurpassed for its elegance and workmanship in the minor arts.

Egyptian art reflected and reinforced the attitudes of the Egyptians toward their physical and spiritual environment and was intimately related to the hieroglyphic system of writing, along with which it developed at an early period. The predominance of funerary objects, which may foster the misapprehension that the ancient Egyptians were obsessed with preparing for their burial and with the preservation of their bodies, is to some degree an accident of Egypt's geography: the desert—where funerary monuments were erected—offers an ideal climate for the preservation of artifacts. But an intense concern for the afterlife certainly permeated the ancient Egyptian culture and initiated many important works of art.

Egyptian art was by no means a monolithic tradition. The most dramatic innovations were made in the reign of Akhenaten (about 1353–1335 B.C.), who imposed his personal deity, the Aten, over all other gods in the Egyptian pantheon. The art of Akhenaten's reign illustrates, in a manner rarely demonstrated in other historical periods, the intimate correlation between Egyptian art and religion.

The Museum's collection of Egyptian art is one of the largest outside the Cairo Museum, and virtually all of its approximately thirty-six thousand objects are on permanent display. Many of the works were obtained by the Museum through its own extensive program of excavations, which began in 1906 and ended in 1936. After a hiatus of nearly fifty years, the department is once again excavating in Egypt.

Early Dynasty 12, ca. 1990 B.C.

MODEL OF A BOAT

Gessoed and painted wood; H. 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(37.1 cm)

Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift,
1920 (20.3.1)

A 1920 expedition led by the Metropolitan Museum uncovered in Thebes in the tomb of Meketra, a chancellor who served Mentuhotep II and III and Amenemhat I, 23 painted wooden replicas of the chancellor's house and garden, the shops of his estate, his fleet of ships, his herd of cattle, and his servants bringing offerings to his tomb. All of these models were executed in miniature but with the utmost accuracy and attention to detail and were found in a state of almost perfect preservation. Probably no single find has contributed so graphically to our knowledge of the estates and other possessions of a wealthy Egyptian of the Middle Kingdom or provided us with such rich material for a general study of daily life in ancient Egypt.





Dynasty 12, ca. 1900–1800 B.C.

COFFIN OF KHNUMNAKHT

Painted wood; L. 82 in. (208.3 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1915 (15.2.2)

The brilliantly painted exterior of the coffin of Khnumnakht, an individual unidentified except for his inscribed name, displays the multiplicity of texts and decorative panels characteristic of coffin decoration of the second half of Dynasty 12. It has at least one feature—the figure of a goddess on the head

end—that is rare before the late Middle Kingdom. Painted at the end of one side is an architectural façade with a doorway for the passage of the soul, from which two eyes look forth onto the world of the living. The rest of the exterior is divided into panels framed between inscribed invocations to, and recitations by, various primeval deities and gods, particularly those associated with death and rebirth, such as Osiris, primary god of the dead, and Anubis, god of embalming.

Dynasty 5, ca. 2350 B.C.

MEMISABU AND HIS WIFE

Painted limestone; H. 24 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (61.9 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1948 (48.111)

The statues placed in Egyptian tombs of the Old Kingdom provided habitations for the *ka*, or spirit, of the deceased. Customarily the wife is represented embracing her husband, but here Memisabu and his wife each embrace the other, which suggests that she—not her husband, a steward and keeper of the king's property—was the tomb's owner. This statue can be linked stylistically with monuments from the cemetery west of the great Pyramid of Khufu (Cheops) at Giza.





Dynasty 18, ca. 1479–1429 B.C.

SANDALS AND BRACELETS

Gold, carnelian, and turquoise glass; sandals:

L. 10 in. (25.4 cm); bracelets: Diam. 7¼ in.

(19.7 cm), 7½ in. (19.4 cm)

Fletcher Fund, 1926 (26.8.146ab; 26.8.125, 127)

The treasure of the three minor wives of Thutmose III is the most spectacular group of royal jewelry of Dynasty 18 before the reign of Tutankhamun (ca. 1333–1323 B.C.).

Cut from sheet gold, the sandals closely imitate tooled leatherwork, but their fragile construction is typical of objects made to adorn a mummy.



Dynasty 18, ca. 1473–1458 B.C.

QUEEN HATSHEPSUT

Painted indurated limestone; H. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
(194.9 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1929 (29.3.2)

With the ascension of King Thutmose III and Queen Hatshepsut, Egypt entered one of the most glorious periods in its long history—the time of its greatest military strength, territorial expansion, and material prosperity. When Thutmose II died, his rightful heir, Thutmose III, was still a child, and so Hatshepsut, the boy's stepmother, became regent. Within a few years, she became crowned king, with full pharaonic powers. Her magnificent funerary temple at Deir el Bahri in western Thebes was intended both to legitimize and to commemorate her rule. Statues of Hatshepsut were placed throughout the temple, including this one showing the great queen in masculine guise. Not only the royal kilt and headdress but also the bare if admittedly soft torso are those of a man. Though certainly idealized, the delicate face gives us one of the finest representations of Hatshepsut extant. We know her subjects were fully aware of the female gender of this king, but as pharaoh she had to play the role of a man. The sculptor, with some success, tried to reconcile political myth with human reality.



Dynasty 18, ca. 1349–1342 B.C.

FRAGMENTARY HEAD OF A QUEEN

Yellow jasper; H. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (14 cm)
Purchase, Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1926
(26.7.1396)

This extraordinary fragment, polished to a mirrorlike finish, is both sensual in expression and boldly sculptural in execution. It reflects the expressionistic style prevalent during the early reign of King Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten, the religious innovator who propagated the worship of one god, the Aten. The head belonged to a composite statue, in which the exposed flesh parts were of jasper and the remaining

elements of other appropriate materials. The use of yellow stone for the skin indicates that the person represented was female; the scale and superb quality of the work imply that she was a queen. The similarity of the full, curved lips to known representations of Queen Tiye has suggested that it is she who is depicted here. But the lips of the jasper head lack the downturn at the corners of the mouth characteristic of all images of Tiye. Indeed, the sensuality of the image seems more appropriate for a younger woman, and both Akhenaten's chief queen, Nefertiti, and his secondary wife, Kiya, are possible subjects.





Amarna Painted Reliefs

Dynasty 18, ca. 1345–1335 B.C.

AKHENATEN PRESENTING A DUCK TO ATEN

Painted limestone; H. 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (24.4 cm)
Gift of Norbert Schimmel, 1985 (1985.328.2)

TWO PRINCESSES

Painted limestone; H. 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (22 cm)
Gift of Norbert Schimmel, 1985 (1985.328.6)

THE KING MAKING AN OFFERING

Painted limestone; H. 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (21 cm)
Gift of Norbert Schimmel, 1985 (1985.328.3)

During his 17-year reign, Amenhotep IV, who changed his name to Akhenaten, radically altered the official state religion by proscribing the worship of any god but the Aten, the power of light embodied in the sun disk. Whatever may have motivated Akhenaten, Egypt's experiment in qualified monotheism really impinged only upon the courtiers who surrounded the king, and at his death the traditional forms of worship reasserted themselves. For his unorthodoxy Akhenaten was to suffer the destruction of his monuments and his name at the hands of posterity. These relief blocks are carved in the expressive and realistic style peculiar to Akhenaten's reign. In the relief at the upper left the king is shown making an offering of a pintail duck to Aten, whose rays, ending in hands, reach down to him.

One of the hands holds an *ankh*—the symbol of life—to the king's nose. In the relief below the demonstration of affection between two of Akhenaten's daughters is typical of the intimacy allowed in representations of the royal family in the art of the Amarna Period. Although affectionate gestures are not entirely unknown in royal art of other eras, the naturalism of this pose and the frontal treatment of the torso of the older (larger) sister are unparalleled among royal figures and extremely rare in any type of representation in other periods of Egyptian art.



Dynasty 18, ca. 1340–1330 B.C.

CANOPIC JAR LID

Alabaster, bronze, obsidian, and blue paste;
H. 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (18.1 cm)

Theodore M. Davis Collection, Bequest of
Theodore M. Davis, 1915 (30.8.54)

Although the canopic jar to which this lid belongs was designed for a practical purpose (as a container for an embalmed human organ), the lid is an unusually fine representation of a royal woman that can be dated to the reign of Akhenaten or shortly thereafter. The massive wig of layered curls is a headdress favored by Akhenaten's queen, Nefertiti, their six daughters, a minor queen, Kiya, and sometimes the queen mother Tiye. The jar was found in Thebes in a tomb in the Valley of the Kings that has aroused a great controversy concerning the events surrounding Akhenaten's death and succession.

Asyut, Early Dynasty 19, ca. 1290–1270 B.C.

STATUE OF YUNY

Painted indurated limestone; H. 50 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
(129 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1933 (33.2.1)

The statue of Yuny—a beautiful example of post-Amarna art—was found in the tomb of his father, Amenhotep, a chief physician. Yuny's own titles indicate that he too belonged to the medical profession. Here he kneels, holding an elaborately carved shrine containing a small figure of the god Osiris. The necklace of lenticular beads was a decoration given by the king for distinguished service. Yuny's eyes and eyebrows, once inlaid with semiprecious stones, were gouged out by an ancient thief.





Dynasty 30, 360–343 B.C.

THE METTERNICH STELA

Graywacke; H. 32 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (83.5 cm)

Fletcher Fund, 1950 (50.85)

The kings of Dynasty 30 were the last native Egyptian rulers. This stela is dated to the reign of the last king of this dynasty, Nectanebo II. Carved of graywacke by a master of hard-stone sculpture, it is the finest and most elaborate example of Egyptian magical stelae. The child Horus standing on two crocodiles is the dominant motif. Above him are representations of the sun's nightly journey through the netherworld. The inscriptions are a set of 13 spells against poison and illness. These were designed to be said by a physician treating a patient, but their effectiveness could also be absorbed by drinking water that was poured over the stela. The inscription around the base contains part of the myth of Isis and Osiris, describing how the infant Horus was cured of poison by Thoth in the delta marshes. Thus Horus serves as the divine prototype for this sort of cure. The stela was made by the priest Esatum to be erected in a necropolis of sacred bulls. In 1828 the stela was presented by Muhammad Ali to the Austrian chancellor, Prince Metternich.

Dynasty 21, ca. 1070–945 B.C.

OUTER COFFIN OF HENETTAWY

Gessoed and painted wood; L. 79 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.

(202.9 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1925 (25.3.182)

During the Third Intermediate Period, an unsettled time, the individual private tomb was abandoned in favor of family burials (or caches) whose single shaft could be more easily guarded; often tombs that had already been robbed were reused for this purpose. Henettawy, a mistress of the house and chantress of Amen-Ra, was buried in such a tomb. Since her burial chamber, like most others of the time, was undecorated, the paintings on her coffin, with their emphasis on elaborate religious symbolism and imagery, replaced the wall decorations of previous periods and reflect a style and iconography developed during the last years of the New Kingdom.





Early Roman Period, ca. 15 B.C.

TEMPLE OF DENDUR

Aeolian sandstone; L. of gateway and temple
82 ft. (25 m)

Given to the United States by Egypt in 1965,
awarded to The Metropolitan Museum of Art
in 1967, and installed in The Sackler Wing in
1978 (68.154)

This Egyptian monument, originally
erected in Nubia, would have been
completely submerged as a result of the
construction of the Aswan High Dam,
begun in 1960. Instead, the temple was
given to the United States in recognition of
the American contribution to the
international campaign to save the ancient
Nubian monuments. The temple was built
by the Roman emperor Augustus and
honors the goddess Isis and two deified sons
of a local Nubian chieftain. The complex,
reassembled as it appeared on the banks of
the Nile, is a simplified version of the
standard Egyptian cult temple.

Ptolemaic Period, 304–30 B.C.

COFFIN FOR A SACRED CAT

Bronze; H. 11 in. (27.9 cm)

Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1956 (56.16.1)

Since the beginning of Egyptian history,
many deities were represented in the form
of animals or as human figures with animal
heads. The cat was understood to be the
sacred animal of Bastet, a goddess
worshiped in the eastern delta town of
Bubastis. In the fifth century B.C., the Greek
historian Herodotus described the great
annual festival of Bastet and her beautiful
temple, near which mummified cats were
interred in large cemeteries. This hollow
figure, a fine example of the ancient
Egyptian art of bronze casting, served as a
coffin for a mummified cat.





The Ancient Near East



THE ORIGIN OF MANY features of Western civilization lies in the lands of the Near East, where small villages of hunters, gatherers, and farmers evolved into the first true cities. "Ancient Near East" is a general term that embraces both an enormous geographical territory and a long chronological span. The Museum's holdings of ancient Near Eastern art represent cultures from western Turkey east to the valley of the Indus River and from the Caucasus Mountains as far south as the Gulf of Aden. From this enormous geographic area come

works of art that date from the late Neolithic period of the seventh millennium B.C. to the Islamic conquest in the middle of the seventh century A.D.

Mesopotamia, which lay between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers, was the heart of the ancient Near East. As early as the seventh millennium B.C., these great rivers were major routes of communication, connecting distant regions. They were the source of water that, through irrigation, transformed the arid plains into fertile soil suitable for grazing and for growing crops. Urban civilization began in southern Mesopotamia during the fourth millennium B.C. Specialized full-time occupations, such as architect, artist, scribe, craftsman, farmer, and institutions such as the priesthood and kingship came into existence. The people responsible for this urban revolution, as it has been called, were the Sumerians, who are thought to have developed the first known script, a system of pictographs that later evolved into wedge-shaped cuneiform signs.

The Sumerians were succeeded by the Akkadians, a Semitic people who had entered southern Mesopotamia, probably from the west, during the centuries of Sumerian control. This dynasty was founded by Sargon of Akkad (2334–2279 B.C.), who was the first Mesopotamian ruler to have truly imperial aspirations. In 2154, however, the empire collapsed under invasions of tribesmen from western Iran. The period that followed is called Neo-Sumerian because the rulers and priests consciously returned to pre-Akkadian artistic forms and to the use of the Sumerian language. By the beginning of the second millennium, the kings of Assyria began to consolidate their power in northern Mesopotamia and within a few centuries dominated vast territories in the Near East.

The first millennium B.C. was a period of great empires, first in Assyria and later in Babylonia and Achaemenid Iran. The imperial palaces constructed in the Assyrian cities of Nimrud, Nineveh, Khorsabad, and Ashur were lavishly decorated. During the three decades of its development, the art of the Assyrian Empire reflected an increasing concern with secular themes, which elaborated and glorified the royal image.

Ancient Anatolia (modern Turkey) was an area with an abundance of metal resources and a trading center for merchants from Mesopotamia and Syria in the early second millennium B.C. During this period the Hittites entered the region and gained control of the Anatolian plateau. In the period of their empire (15th–13th century B.C.) the Hittites produced monumental architecture and sculpture and fine metalwork and ceramics. After the Hittite collapse at the turn of the millennium, a number of smaller kingdoms gained power in the region, notably Urartu, centered around Lake Van in eastern Anatolia, and Phrygia, known best from the site of Gordion in central Anatolia.

(OPPOSITE)

Iranian, Proto-Elamite, ca. 2900 B.C.

KNEELING BULL HOLDING A VASE

Silver; H. 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (16.2 cm)

Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1966
(66.173)

This small silver bull from southwestern Iran is of exceptional technical quality and is composed of many parts carefully fitted together. The figure shows a curious blend of human and animal traits: the large neck meets distinctly human shoulders, which taper into arms that end in hooves. Animals in human posture are known in Iranian Proto-Elamite sculpture and can be seen engraved on contemporary cylinder seals. The purpose and meaning of this small masterpiece remain enigmatic, although it is thought that the bull acting like a human is drawn from a contemporary religious myth. Traces of cloth found affixed to the figure suggest that it was wrapped and intentionally buried, perhaps as part of a ritual or ceremony.

(LEFT)

Iranian, Sasanian,

late 5th–early 6th century A.D.

PLATE WITH PEROZ OR KAVAD I HUNTING RAMS

Silver with mercury gilding and niello;

Diam. 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (21.9 cm)

Fletcher Fund, 1934 (34.33)

Many vessels made of silver survive from the Sasanian Empire (A.D. 224–642) and attest to the great wealth of the royal court. One of the finest examples is this silver plate, which shows a king in full ceremonial dress hunting a pair of rams. The raised design is made from a number of separate pieces fitted into lips that were cut up from the background of the plate. The theme of the king as hunter symbolized the prowess of Sasanian rulers and was often used to decorate royal plates sent as gifts to neighboring courts.



Indus Valley, ca. 2000 B.C.

RECUMBENT MOUFLON

Marble; L. 11 in. (27.9 cm)

Purchase, Anonymous Gift and Rogers Fund, 1978 (1978.58)

The artist who carved this powerful sculpture, which represents a type of wild sheep native to the highland regions of the Near East, has achieved a realistic rendering of an animal at rest. The animal's head, now partially broken away, is held upward and turned slightly to the right, creating a naturalistic impression of alertness. The entire body is contained within a single unbroken outline. This combination of closed outline with broadly modeled masses and a minimum of incised detail is characteristic of animal sculpture from this period in the art of the Indus River valley.

During the seventh century B.C., before the Achaemenid Persian conquest that reached into western Anatolia, Scythian invaders to this area, as well as Mesopotamia and Iran, brought with them a distinctive style and repertory of designs featuring stags, panthers, birds of prey, and griffins.

Syria, to the south of Anatolia and west of Mesopotamia, was a crossroads between the great civilizations of the ancient world and was often disputed by rival powers. Despite the continuous presence of foreigners, the art of the region had its own distinctive character. At times during the second and first millennia B.C., however, truly international styles developed in this region. Motifs and designs from Egypt and the Mediterranean world were adopted and, in time, passed from Syria into Mesopotamia.

Southwestern Iran, known as Elam in antiquity, was Mesopotamia's closest neighbor, both geographically and politically. Contacts with lands as far to the north and east as the area known today as Afghanistan, and with the peoples living in the valley of the Indus, exposed the artists of Iran to cultures that were unfamiliar to their Mesopotamian neighbors, and this is reflected in the character and appearance of their works of art.

By the middle of the first millennium B.C., Mesopotamia and Iran, under the rule of Achaemenid kings, were part of an empire that exceeded in its geographical extent any political entity that had come before. Influences from lands throughout the empire, including Assyria, Babylonia, Egypt, and Greece, are apparent in both the style and iconography of the art of the Achaemenid court. The Greek conquest of the Achaemenid Empire in 334 B.C. under Alexander the Great interrupted the cultural development of the Near East and altered the course of civilization in that region. For the next thousand years, in times of peace and war, the kingdoms of the Near East and the Roman and Byzantine empires in the West maintained political and economic ties as well as common cultural traditions.

Iranian, ca. 3400–3100 B.C.

JAR

Terracotta; H. 20 7/8 in. (53 cm)

Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1959 (59.52)

An abundance of fine painted pottery has survived from ancient Iran, and this ovoid storage vessel is a particularly good example. The dark brown geometric decorations divide the upper part of the jar into three panels that contain the stylized figure of an ibex. Each animal is shown in profile against the buff-colored background to highlight the great arch of its exaggerated horns.



A reassertion of a Near Eastern identity, an Iranian renaissance, is apparent in the arts of the beginning of the first century B.C., and it developed under the Parthian and Sasanian dynasties. From the last centuries before Christ to the coming of Islam, the history of the ancient Near East was one of almost continual warfare as the great empires of Byzantium and Iran battled and ultimately exhausted their resources in the effort to control the rich trade routes and cities of Anatolia and Syria.

The Museum's collection of ancient Near Eastern art has been acquired by gift and purchase and by participation in excavations in the Near East. Its strengths include Sumerian stone sculptures, Anatolian ivories and metalwork, Iranian bronzes, and Achaemenid and Sasanian works in silver and gold. An extraordinary group of Assyrian reliefs and statues from the palace of Ashurnasirpal II at Nimrud, as well as fine stamp and cylinder seals and ivories, can be seen in the Assyrian art galleries.



Mesopotamian (Babylon), Neo-Babylonian,
ca. 605–562 B.C.

PANEL WITH STRIDING LION

Glazed brick; $3\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ in. (97.2 × 227.3 cm)

Fletcher Fund, 1931 (31.13.1)

During the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II (605–562 B.C.), the Neo-Babylonian Empire reached its peak. This was largely due to his ability as a statesman and a general. He maintained friendly relations with the Medes in the east while vying successfully with Egypt for the control of trade on the eastern Mediterranean coast. During this period a tremendous amount of building took place, and Babylon became the city of splendor described by Herodotus and the Old Testament Book of Daniel. Because stone is rare in southern Mesopotamia, molded glazed bricks were used to decorate buildings, and Babylon became a city of brilliant color. The most important street in Babylon was the Processional Way, leading from the inner city through the Ishtar Gate to the *Bit Akitu*, or House of the New Year's Festival. This relief of a striding lion is one of many from friezes that covered the walls of the Processional Way. The lion, symbol of Ishtar, goddess of war, served to direct the ritual procession from the city to the temple.





Mesopotamian, ca. 2600–2500 B.C.

CHAPLET OF GOLD LEAVES

Gold, lapis lazuli, carnelian; L. 15½ in.
(38.4 cm)

Dodge Fund, 1933 (33.35.3)

This wreath of gold beech leaves, suspended from strings of lapis lazuli and carnelian beads, encircled the crown of the head. It was part of an important collection of Sumerian jewelry found in one of the richest graves in the Royal Cemetery at Ur, which was excavated in 1927–28 by Sir

Leonard Woolley. The headdress adorned the forehead of one of the female attendants in the so-called King's Tomb. She also wore two necklaces of gold and lapis lazuli, gold hair ribbons, and two silver hair rings. Since gold, silver, lapis lazuli, and carnelian are not found in Mesopotamia, their presence in the royal tombs attests both to the wealth of the Early Dynastic Sumerians and to the existence of a complex system of trade that extended far beyond the Mesopotamian river valley.

Anatolian, Hittite Empire Period,
ca. 15th–13th century B.C.
VESSEL IN THE FORM OF A STAG

Silver with gold inlay; H. 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (18.1 cm)
Gift of Norbert Schimmel Trust, 1989
(1989.281.10)

Anatolia is rich in metal ore, and the consummate skill of Hittite metalworkers is amply demonstrated by this fine silver rhyton, which is thought to be a rare example of art produced by court workshops. Of particular interest is the frieze depicting a religious ceremony that decorates the rim of the cup section. Although the precise meaning of the frieze remains a matter of conjecture, it is possible that the vessel was intended as a dedication to or the personal property of the stag god.





Iranian?, ca. 2000 B.C.

HEAD OF A DIGNITARY

Arsenical copper; H. 13½ in. (34.3 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1947 (47.100.80)

This magnificent copper head is reminiscent of the head of an Akkadian ruler found at Nineveh in northern Mesopotamia. The head is largely hollow, and a dowel on the plate at the base of the neck presumably served to join the head to the body. The heavy-lidded eyes, the prominent but unexaggerated nose, the full lips, and enlarged ears all suggest that this is a naturalistic portrait of a real person, a rare phenomenon in the art of the ancient Near East. Its costly material and impressive workmanship, size, and appearance are all indications that this is a representation of a ruler whose identity remains unknown. In any case, the head is one of the great works of art preserved from the ancient Near East.



Mesopotamian (Nimrud), Neo-Assyrian,
8th century B.C.

NUBIAN TRIBUTE BEARER

Ivory; H. 5¼ (13.3 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1960 (60.145.11)

In contrast to the massive stone reliefs that flanked the walls of the palace of Ashurnasirpal II at Nimrud (see page 39) are the delicate ornamental ivories that once adorned the royal furniture. Ivory, prized

throughout the ancient world, was carved in rich detail and decorated with colorful inlays and gold. The ivories found at Nimrud were executed in several styles that reflected regional differences. This beautiful example was carved in the Phoenician style, characterized by the slender form of the tribute bearer and his animal gifts, the precision of the carving and intricacy of detail, and the distinct Egyptian flavor of both pose and features.



Mesopotamian, Neo-Sumerian, ca. 2100 B.C.

SEATED GUDEA

Diorite; H. 17 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (44.1 cm)

Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1959 (59.2)

At the end of the 22nd century B.C., the city-state of Lagash in the extreme south of Mesopotamia experienced a cultural renaissance under the leadership of the Sumerian governor Gudea and his son Ur-Ningirsu. The works of art produced by this Neo-Sumerian culture are pervaded by a sense of pious reserve and calm, beautifully exemplified by this image of the ruler. It is thought that this statue was originally placed in a temple, as the inscription in cuneiform along the front of his robe reads: "Gudea, the man who built the temple, may it make his life long." Although there are many extant statues of Gudea, this is the only complete example in the United States.

Iranian, ca. 1000 B.C.

CUP WITH FOUR GAZELLES

Gold; H. 2½ in. (6.4 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1962 (62.84)

The tradition of making vessels decorated with animals whose turned heads project in relief has a long history in the Near East. This exquisite cup probably comes from northern Iran, near the Elburz Mountains. The four gazelles walk in procession to the left, framed by guilloché bands. The bodies are fashioned by repoussé and details of body hair and muscles are clearly defined by finely chased lines. The heads, ears, and horns were made separately and fastened in place by colloid hard-soldering, a process much practiced in Iran involving copper salt and glue.



Iranian, Achaemenid, 6th–5th century B.C.

HEAD OF A HORNED ANIMAL

Bronze; H. 13⅜ in. (34 cm)

Fletcher Fund, 1956 (56.45)

This stylized rendering of a mythical animal—part goat, part sheep—is an eloquent example of Iranian art of the Achaemenid period, still untouched by the influence of classical Greece. Cast of bronze by the lost-wax process, it is made of five separate pieces joined by fusion welding. The angle of the neck suggests that the head was not attached to an animal body but was perhaps joined to a support as an element of furniture or architectural decoration.



*Mesopotamian (Khorsabad), Neo-Assyrian,
late 8th century B.C.*

MAN LEADING HORSES

Limestone; 20 × 32 in. (50.8 × 81.3 cm)
Gift of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1933 (33.16.1)

From the ninth to the seventh century B.C., the kings of Assyria ruled over a vast empire. Assyrian sculptors often depicted the victories of their monarchs in war and in the chase. Richly detailed and full of vitality, these scenes expressing regal power and triumph are among the masterworks of Assyrian art. This fragment, which comes from the palace of the king Sargon II (721–705 B.C.) at Khorsabad, shows a mountaineer, probably from Iran, bringing two handsomely caparisoned horses as tribute to the king.

*Mesopotamian (Nimrud), Neo-Assyrian,
ca. 883–859 B.C.*

HUMAN-HEADED WINGED LION

Limestone; H. 122½ in. (311.2 cm)
Gift of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1932 (32.143.2)

During the ninth century B.C. the great Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal II built a new capital at Nimrud, where the palace was decorated with large stone slabs ornamented with low-relief carvings and with sculptural figures guarding the doorways. The Neo-Assyrian sculptor of this limestone guardian gave the beast five legs so that it stands firmly in place when seen from the front, but appears to stride forward when seen from the side. The horned cap attests to the creature's divinity and the belt signifies its power.





Greece and Rome



THE BEGINNINGS OF CLASSICAL art may be discerned long before the people known as Greeks settled the lands bearing their name. Datable as far back as the sixth millennium B.C., the remains of cultures found in Thessaly, central Greece, the Peloponnesos, Crete, the Cycladic Islands, and Cyprus are sparse, but they include figural representations that can be seen as antecedents of Greek art. From the very outset, clay and marble were the preferred materials for artistic creativity, human figures were the preferred subjects, and a pronounced sense of measure governed the forms that were produced.

Consideration of the earliest cultures in Greece from a purely artistic standpoint entails a more selective field of vision than would a balanced, archaeological inquiry into the rich record of the region as a whole that is now coming to light. It was in the Cycladic Islands that the first great flowering of marble sculpture took place during the third millennium B.C. For much of the second millennium, between about 2000 and 1400 B.C., the Minoan culture developed and flourished in great palace complexes on the island of Crete.

The Mycenaean civilization, named after its preeminent center on the Greek mainland, reached a height during the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries B.C. The martial spirit of the Mycenaeans, so foreign to the Minoans, appears in the extent to which skilled craftsmanship was applied to objects of war or representations of warriors. Widespread cultural and political upheaval led to the downfall of the Mycenaean civilization and to a period of some two hundred years during which artistic activity diminished significantly. The renewal, which began about 1000 B.C., took place in mainland Greece, principally Athens. Its artistic manifestation is the Geometric style, a term derived from the curvilinear and rectilinear shapes that are used either as decorative motifs or as components in the depiction of more complex subjects, i.e., figures.

During the eighth century, renewed contacts with and imports from the east began to broaden the Greek repertoire of subjects, and by the end of the seventh century the oriental stimulus had been assimilated. The Archaic period (about 700–480 B.C.) saw an efflorescence of all the arts throughout Greece. Perhaps the single most important development was the emergence of monumental stone sculpture, in the round and in relief. Compared with Geometric renderings, the body is lifelike, becoming ever more so as sculptors acquired the ability to render not only how it looked but also how it moved.

If the Archaic manner of representation depicted the appearance of a subject with maximum clarity, artists of the Classic period (480–323 B.C.) began to introduce the realities of space, time, and character. The medium of sculpture reached its most exalted expression in the friezes, metopes, and pediments of the Parthenon in Athens. The aspects of human activity that Classic artists favored were those emphasizing human strengths: nobility in victory, valor in battle, restraint in mourning. It is in the succeeding, Hellenistic phase of Greek art (323–31 B.C.) that individual features—such as the characterization of a person, the marks of old age, a detail of deformity—acquire unprecedented importance.

(OPPOSITE)

Greek (Argive), mid-5th century B.C.

MIRROR

Bronze; H. 15 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (40.3 cm)

Bequest of Walter C. Baker, 1971 (1972.118.78)

One of the achievements of sculptors of the Classic period is the successful integration of every component part into a whole. The diverse elements in this mirror have been composed into a magnificent utensil and unified by the perfectly balanced composition of the supporting figure. Inserted into the crown of her head is a palmette ornament that supports the mirror disk. Along the beaded border of the disk two hounds each pursue a hare. At the top, the siren constitutes a presence that is at once fearsome, with her lion claws and deployed wings, and feminine, with a coiffure and physiognomy corresponding to those of the caryatid below. This object of exceptional quality was made for the toilette of a lady of means.

(LEFT)

Detail from the Euphronios krater (see page 47)



Cypriot, 7th century B.C.

SILVER BOWL

Silver with gold; Diam. 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (16.8 cm)

The Cesnola Collection, Purchased by subscription, 1874–76 (74.51.4554)

The prosperity of the island of Cyprus between the late eighth and fifth centuries B.C. is reflected in the silver and gold of this splendid bowl and in the quality of its decoration. Various oriental images of power and other decorative motifs were derived from Egypt and Assyria. In the central medallion, a figure in Assyrian dress with four wings attacks a lion, and Egyptian and Assyrian figures can be seen in the surrounding friezes. An inscription on the object indicates that it belonged to a king of the city of Paphos. It probably served to pour liquid offerings or as a drinking cup.

With the rise of Macedon under Philip II and Alexander the Great, the Hellenistic period saw the fields of creative energy displaced from the Greek heartland—Attica and the Peloponnesos—to the periphery, including southern Italy and Asia Minor. The great age of Athens was past. When the Romans conquered and destroyed Corinth in 146 B.C., the transfer of primacy was consummated.

During the Republic, the expansion of Rome over Italy, Spain, North Africa, and Asia subjugated cultures upon which the Greeks had left their mark. By the time the empire was established under Augustus (27 B.C.), Rome had achieved the power and organization to administer a realm whose greatest extent, under Trajan (A.D. 53–117), reached from Britain to Mesopotamia. The qualities and capacities of each successive ruler influenced not only the political but also the artistic world. Through architecture, sculpture, and coinage, the Roman presence was asserted in far-flung regions. Edward Gibbon observed that the hallmarks of civilization are art, law, and manners. It was the Roman achievement to hold its vast and diverse domains by a formal system of laws. Moreover, by endowing the symbols of its jurisdiction with the qualities so ardently assimilated from the Greek world, they became an integral part of what is called Western civilization.

Although the Department of Greek and Roman Art was not formally established until 1909, the first accessioned object in the Museum was a Roman sarcophagus from Tarsus, donated in 1870. Today the strengths of the vast collection include Cypriot sculpture, painted Greek vases, Roman portrait busts, and Roman wall paintings. The department's holdings in glass and silver are among the finest in the world, and the collection of Archaic Attic sculpture is second only to that in Athens.

Cycladic, ca. 2700 B.C.

HARP PLAYER

Marble; H. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (29.2 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1947 (47.100.1)

The figures and vases produced in the Cycladic Islands between about 4500 and 2200 B.C. represent the first flowering of marble sculpture in Greece. Little is known about their function and meaning, but they come to light primarily in burials. Usually made of marble and originally painted, these figures are predominantly representations of women. This exceptional example shows a male musician seated on a sturdy chair, accompanying himself on a harplike instrument. Simple as the forms are, such details as the muscles of the upper arm or the articulation of various parts of the chair give this work extraordinary immediacy.





Greek (Attic), second half of 7th century B.C.

FUNERARY VASE

Terracotta; H. 42 5/8 in. (108.3 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1914 (14.130.14)

This large vase, which was originally a grave marker, is a superb example of work of the Geometric period in Greek art (ca. 1000–700 B.C.) and a precious source of information about early Greek funerary rituals. At the broadest part of the vase, framed by the handles, the deceased is represented lying on a bier surrounded by mourners. In the zone below warriors in chariots alternate with foot soldiers carrying great figure-eight shields. Although the decoration is schematic, Geometric art from Attica and its center, Athens, shows extraordinary inventiveness and often monumentality.

Greek (Attic), early 6th century B.C.

KOUROS

Marble; H. 76 in. (193 cm)

Fletcher Fund, 1932 (32.11.1)

The tradition of large scale in Geometric funerary vases continues into both vases and sculpture of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. One of the most important types of freestanding statue is that of the kouros (youth), which served as a funerary monument or as a dedication in a sanctuary. The figure stands in perfect balance with absolute serenity. There is no attribute or detail to introduce any narrative or episodic dimension. Such sculptures, which were made through the sixth century B.C., are the point of departure for the progressive mastery of the human figure in Greek art. By about 500 B.C., when artists became interested in showing “active” movement, bronze was increasingly used for monumental works.







Exekias (painter)
Greek (Attic), ca. 540 B.C.
NECK AMPHORA

Terracotta; H. 18½ in. (47 cm)
Rogers Fund, 1917 (17.230.14)

Exekias is perhaps the greatest of all black-figure vase-painters, and this is one of his finest works. He has covered the entire surface of this neck amphora, a storage jar, with decoration, and yet the effect is one of great order. The scene shows a wedded pair in the chariot being greeted by a woman or a goddess while a youth, perhaps Apollo,

plays the kithara. The floral and geometric bands on the neck and body emphasize the measured cadence of the action and the shape of the pot itself.

Euphronios (painter) and
Euxitheos (potter)

Greek (Attic), ca. 515 B.C.
CALYX KRATER

Terracotta; H. 18 in. (45.7 cm)
Purchase, Bequest of Joseph H. Durkee, Gift of Darius Ogden Mills and Gift of C. Ruxton Love, by exchange, 1972 (1972.11.10)

This krater is a masterpiece of composition and a superb example of the red-figure technique by two of the most prominent Athenian artists of the late sixth century B.C. Depicted here is an episode of the Trojan War in which Sarpedon, a son of Zeus and leader of the Trojans' allies, has just been slain by Achilles' friend Patroklos. Sleep and Death, under the direction of Hermes, are in the process of bearing off the fallen hero to Lycia, his native land, for burial.



Greek (Alexandrian?),
late 3rd–early 2nd century B.C.

VEILED AND MASKED DANCER

Bronze; H. 8 1/8 in. (20.4 cm)
Bequest of Walter C. Baker, 1971 (1972.118.95)

The expressive possibilities of drapery, which Greek artists pursued most extensively in the female figure, reach a high point in this statuette of a dancing woman. The subject has been identified as one of the

professional entertainers—a combination of mime and dancer—for which the city of Alexandria was famous in antiquity. Although the virtuosic conception, composition, and technical execution place this work in a special category, the figure represents as much of an innovation in Greek art as the deformed, infirm, and realistically rendered genre subjects that Hellenistic Alexandria established in the iconographic repertoire.



Greek (Parian), ca. 450–440 B.C.

GRAVE RELIEF: GIRL WITH DOVES

Marble; H. 31 1/2 in. (80 cm)
Fletcher Fund, 1927 (27.45)

In ancient Greece gravestones were set up for children as well as adults; boys and girls were shown engaged in activities by which their parents wished them to be remembered. This work was found on the island of Paros, one of the main sources in antiquity for marble that was used in sculpture. The sculptor, probably a local artist, conveys the youth of the child through the pudgy body and limbs as well as her affection for her pet doves; the serious expression—well beyond her years—emphasizes the poignancy of her early death.

Etruscan, late 6th century B.C.

CHARIOT

Bronze; H. 51½ in. (130.8 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1903 (03.23.1)

In the sixth century B.C. chariots were no longer used in warfare. Found in a tomb in Monteleone, Italy, this example was probably put to limited ceremonial use before being included in the burial. The richness and quality of the decoration are exceptional. The pole issues from the head of a boar and ends in the head of a beaked bird. The principal subjects on the three parts of the chariot box refer to the life of a hero, probably Achilles. In the central panel (right) he is receiving his armor from his mother, Thetis. While the style and the subject are from Greek sources, the inflated appearance of the figures and the predilection for winged creatures are distinctly Etruscan.



Roman (Augustan), ca. 10 B.C.–A.D. 4

PORTRAIT STATUE, PERHAPS OF
LUCIUS CAESAR

Bronze; H. 48½ in. (123.2 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1914 (14.130.1)

One of the Metropolitan's finest bronzes from antiquity, this portrait beautifully presents the mixed nature of adolescence, combining the body of a boy with the demeanor of a self-possessed young man. The statue was found on the island of Rhodes and is thought to depict one of the grandsons of the emperor Augustus, probably Lucius Caesar (17 B.C.–A.D. 2), who, with his brother, Gaius, was given a classical education on Rhodes by Greek teachers until he was ready for military service. The richly decorated pallium he wears is a mark of status, and his hands probably once held objects connected with a religious ceremony. Although the work is a specific characterization, the graceful classical features and modeling are typical of Augustan portraiture.







Roman, 40–30 B.C.

CUBICULUM FROM BOSCOREALE

Rogers Fund, 1903 (03.14.13)

The Metropolitan Museum owns two superlative groups of Roman wall paintings. One, from a villa near Boscoreale, about a mile north of Pompeii, includes a virtually complete bedroom (cubiculum). Like Pompeii, the villa was buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in A.D. 79, and it is for this reason that the paintings are so well preserved. The bedroom (now furnished with a couch made of bone and a mosaic, both later works from different sources) is decorated with complex architectural vistas and various kinds of garden scenes. The detail above depicts a religious precinct with a statue of Hecate. The scene below shows an agglomeration of buildings with a remarkable variety of verandas and porticoes.



Roman, A.D. 260–270

THE SEASONS SARCOPHAGUS

Marble; H. 35 in. (88.9 cm), L. 87¼ in.
(222.9 cm)

Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1955 (55.11.5)

Sarcophagi were used in burials throughout antiquity. This superb example shows the wine god, Bacchus, riding a panther in the company of his followers, the satyrs and maenads, as well as the four seasons. The last appear as four youths, each bearing appropriate attributes. While the wine god and his retinue begin in Greek mythology, the presentation here exemplifies Roman art at its best. The density of the figures perfectly ordered within a shallow space, the carving of the forms in extraordinarily high relief, and the restless play of light and dark over the surface generate an energy that gives vibrancy to the entire work.

Roman Imperial, first century A.D.

STATUE OF PAN

Marble; H. 26⅞ in. (67.6 cm)

Classical Purchase Fund, 1992 (1992.11.71)

This splendid example of ancient high baroque sculpture is unique in the Museum's collection. The bravura carving and the high quality of the workmanship are typical, however, of many Roman interpretations of Hellenistic baroque sculpture. Pan, the goat god, is shown braced against a tree trunk, bent forward under the weight of an object once carried on his back. A hole drilled through the statue suggests that it was designed to be part of a fountain complex.



Roman, ca. A.D. 325

**PORTRAIT OF THE EMPEROR
CONSTANTINE I**

Marble; H. 37½ in. (95.3 cm)

Bequest of Mary Clark Thompson, 1923
(26.229)

The third century A.D. was a period of turmoil and strife within the Roman Empire that manifested itself artistically in a diversity of concurrent styles and a predisposition for representing spiritual states of being rather than physical verisimilitude. Christianity emerged as a significant force at this time and was decisively strengthened by the conversion of the emperor Constantine in A.D. 312. This portrait of Constantine, which originally surmounted a colossal seated statue, documents the transfer of ultimate authority from the mortal ruler to his savior.



THE MIDDLE AGES





Medieval Europe



THE CHRISTIAN ART THAT emerged from the Greco-Roman world is one of the most important achievements of Western civilization. With the Edict of Milan in 313 the emperor Constantine the Great (reigned 306–337) formally recognized Christianity. Although this was a critical turning point, the transition from classical to Christian art was not abrupt, since for several hundred years both cultures coexisted and competed with each other. Christianity had its roots in Judaism and shared with it a proscription against images. Christians also

resisted images because of their association with pagan religious practices. These factors impeded the development of a pictorial language appropriate to the new religion. Gradually, however, the power of the image became important to the promotion of Christianity and to conveying its message.

Since the reign of Constantine, Byzantium had increasingly become the center of the Roman Empire, while barbarian invasions disrupted the political and cultural fabric of the West. By the sixth century the eastern capital of Constantinople became the nucleus of a brilliant civilization. The emperor Justinian (reigned 527–565) inaugurated a dazzling building campaign of churches and public structures throughout the empire. The aesthetic aims of the Golden Age of Byzantium influenced all art forms and can be witnessed in portraits, ivories, and jewelry. Implements for the celebration of the Mass—gold and silver chalices, patens, ewers—essentially continued Roman forms of construction and design but were adapted to new functions.

The most distinctive local art of the Mediterranean developed in Egypt, where Coptic Christianity evolved. Essentially decorative in character, Coptic art ultimately was one of the bases of Islamic art. The rise of Islam permanently transformed the civilization of the eastern Mediterranean, and a violent dispute erupted in 726 over the permissibility of images, which led to the wholesale destruction of all representations by the “icon smashers,” as they were called. Simultaneously, the northern European communities, especially the Frankish kingdoms, began to emerge artistically. During this formative period, many different artistic styles coexisted.

The barbarian invasions had permanently transformed the classical world and led to the rise of the Western civilizations of Europe. Following a nomadic life, the barbarians carried their wealth with them, usually in the form of jewelry. Two principal styles dominate the artistic forms of the migrating peoples: the polychrome style, associated with the Goths, Vandals, and Huns, and the animal style that originated in Scandinavia and northern Germany.

The Franks, who established the only lasting political power in Roman Gaul and converted to Christianity under Clovis I (reigned 481–511), ultimately founded the Carolingian Empire, which unified much of Europe. The essential qualities of barbaric art—its abstract, nonnarrative, geometric elements—were inappropriate for expressing the revival of the western Roman Empire. A cultural revival was therefore begun by Charlemagne, who was crowned in 774, and continued by Otto the Great, who in the tenth century inaugurated the Christianization of central Europe.

The identification of the term Romanesque with architecture is due to the great explosion of building activity through Europe in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries,

(OVERLEAF)

Detail of the Annunciation triptych (see page 74)

(OPPOSITE)

Pyrenees (Roussillon), ca. 1130–40

THE CUXA CLOISTER

Marble

The Cloisters Collection, 1925

This is a view of the west arcade of the cloister from the Benedictine monastery of Saint-Michel-de-Cuxa, located in the northeastern Pyrenees. The French closed the monastery in 1791 and much of the stonework was dispersed. The portion of the cloister installed here is remarkable for the variety of its carved capitals, which range from simple block forms to abstracted floral ornament to ferocious lions and exuberantly ribald apes.

(LEFT)

Anglo-Saxon (Kent), early 7th century

BROOCH

Gold, silver, garnets, gold wire; Diam. 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (4.8 cm)

Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1987 (1987.90.1)

The geometric decorative and accomplished metalworking technique seen in early clasps like this handsome pin were an important legacy of the nonclassical tradition in the formulation of later medieval art.



French (probably Paris), mid-13th century
SALTCELLAR

Gold, rock crystal, emeralds, pearls, spinel or balas rubies; H. 5½ in. (14 cm)

The Cloisters Collection, 1983 (1983.434)

This accomplished example of Parisian goldsmiths' work—with its boat-shaped receptacle—originally functioned as a container for a precious commodity such as salt or spice. Because of its rarity, salt was traditionally kept in separate containers, which, when placed on the table, determined the relative seating of guests according to their social standing. The tiny serpent handle, often a feature on such salts, was possibly a reference to the widespread medieval belief in the power of serpent tongues (in actuality fossilized sharks' teeth) to warn of the presence of poison.

as the Church became the principal patron of the arts. Romanesque art, whether it is monumental church sculpture, manuscript illumination, or the sumptuary arts, is a synthesis of the preceding epochs, striving for orderly systematization of ideas and images. Although in some areas the Romanesque survived into the thirteenth century, its increasing exposure to classicizing forms (partially as a result of Byzantine influences) led to its eclipse and to the rise of the Gothic.

Between 1140 and 1270 the Gothic style emerged in France, and it would dominate the artistic landscape of northern Europe for nearly four hundred years. The principal catalyst for the miraculous rise of the great cathedrals was the rebirth of the cities, where new political, commercial, and ecclesiastical wealth was concentrated.

The Late Gothic period, characterized by an increased secularity, gave rise to an increasingly powerful urban middle class. In this tumultuous environment, artistic and intellectual achievement advanced with astonishing inventiveness and expressiveness, its fast pace halted only by the onslaught of the Black Death in 1348. Recurrent economic recession brought on extremes of poverty and wealth, and lavish objects of every description were produced in unprecedented quantities. About 1400 the International Style swept Europe. This brief phenomenon produced elongated, elegant figures draped in flowing curvilinear folds, which impart a mystical lyricism to the human image.

If the fourteenth century can be said to have been dominated by sculpture and the three-dimensional arts, the fifteenth century was one in which the two-dimensional art of painting flourished along with the decorative arts, including great tapestries—the mural paintings of the north—and elaborate gold ecclesiastical and secular objects. The humanistic recognition of individual artistic expression heralded the end of the Middle

Early Byzantine (Constantinople),
late 5th–early 6th century

BUST OF A LADY OF RANK

Marble; H. 20⅞ in. (53 cm)

The Cloisters Collection, 1966 (66.25)

This superb marble bust, made in the Byzantine capital of Constantinople, represents the highest quality of stone carving in the era when the emperor Justinian led the Byzantine Empire to its greatest height. More than just a memorial, the bust captures some of the lady's gentle spirit. Her hair is tightly coiffed and covered by a snood. She wears an elegantly draped mantle over a tunic and carries a scroll, indicating her high social status. The sensitive carving of her features gives this portrait a feeling of naturalism despite its fixed gaze.



Ages in Italy in the early fifteenth century.

The core of the Museum's collection of medieval art was formed by a major gift of J. Pierpont Morgan in 1917 and now numbers over four thousand pieces, which are in the Museum's main building. Among the strengths of the collection are Early Christian and Byzantine silver, enamels, glass, and ivories; Migration jewelry; Romanesque and Gothic metalwork, stained glass, sculpture, enamels, and ivories; and Gothic tapestries. The Cloisters, located in northern Manhattan overlooking the Hudson River, incorporates architectural elements of five medieval cloisters. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., provided the grounds and the building to house the works the Museum had acquired from George Grey Barnard in 1925, as well as works from his own collection. Known particularly for its Romanesque and Gothic architectural sculpture, the Cloisters collection also includes illuminated manuscripts, stained glass, wall and panel paintings, metalwork, enamels, and ivories. Among its tapestries are the renowned Unicorn Tapestries, originally from Rockefeller's own collection.



*Syrian? (Kaper Koraon), Early Byzantine,
6th century*

THE "ANTIOCH CHALICE"

Silver, silver gilt; H. 7½ in. (19.1 cm)
The Cloisters Collection, 1950 (50.4)

The plain silver cup that is the core of this vessel is encased in an elaborate openwork container of silver gilt. Recent research has identified the vessel as part of a large horde of Early Christian liturgical silver, probably from the village of Kaper Koraon in Syria. It has been suggested that the vessel was never a chalice at all but a standing oil lamp. In its densely inhabited grapevine Christ appears twice—seated with a scroll and seated by a lamb above an eagle with outspread wings. The other seated figures acclaim Christ, perhaps in reference to "I am the light."



Early Byzantine (Constantinople), 628–630

DAVID AND GOLIATH

Silver; Diam. 19½ in. (49.5 cm)

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.396)

This silver plate is the largest of a set of nine illustrating scenes from the life of the Hebrew king David that was uncovered in 1902 in Cyprus. This episode shows David slaying the Philistine warrior Goliath: at the

top of the plate David curses Goliath; in the center Goliath lunges at him; at the bottom David beheads the fallen giant. Because the relief decoration makes these plates unsuitable for practical use, it is likely that they were intended for ceremonial display. They were produced during the reign of the emperor Heraclius, perhaps to commemorate his victory over the Persian general Razatis in 627. Each plate is

made of a solid piece of silver, and the extraordinarily rich imagery is chased by hand, making these among the most spectacular works of Byzantine art in existence.



Carolingian, early 9th century

**PLAQUE WITH SEATED SAINT JOHN
THE EVANGELIST**

Ivory; $7\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{3}{8}$ in. (19.1 × 9.2 cm)

The Cloisters Collection, 1977 (1977.421)

After Charlemagne was crowned Holy Roman Emperor in the year 800, he sought to reassert the grandeur of the first Christian emperors, and the arts played an important part in this renaissance. This plaque representing Saint John the Evangelist probably decorated the wing of a triptych that may have been made in Charlemagne's court school. The saint, accompanied by his symbol, the eagle, displays the opening text of his gospel: "In the beginning was the word." The deep layering of the drapery and the architectural setting reflect Classical imagery.



Mosan, third quarter of 12th century

**PLAQUE SHOWING THE
PENTECOST**

Champlevé enamel on copper gilt;

$4\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ in. (11.4 × 11.4 cm)

The Cloisters Collection, 1965 (65.105)

Artists of the Meuse valley (in modern-day France and Belgium) were traditionally renowned for their beautiful works in

champlevé enamel. This jewel-like plaque is the crowning piece of a number of Mosan enamels in the Museum's collection, part of an extensive series that once decorated a large object, perhaps an altarpiece or foot of a cross. The plaque illustrates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples of Christ at the Pentecost. This event became viewed as the birth of the Christian Church.

French (Troyes), ca. 1170–80

PANEL WITH CENSING ANGELS

Pot-metal glass with vitreous paint;

18½ × 17¾ in. (47 × 44.1 cm)

Gift of Ella Brummer, in memory of her husband, Ernest Brummer, 1977 (1977.346.1)

The stained glass produced in the city of Troyes during the late 12th century represents a major development in the

transition from the Romanesque to the Gothic style. This panel, possibly from the church of Saint-Étienne, is from a window of connected semicircles whose overall subject was the Dormition of the Virgin. Its meticulous painting style is unlike that usually found in stained glass of this period but bears a resemblance to techniques used in Mosan enamelwork and manuscript illuminations from Champagne.



*English (Bury Saint Edmunds?),
mid-12th century*

THE CLOISTERS CROSS

Walrus ivory with traces of polychromy;

22¾ × 14¼ in.

(57.5 × 36.2 cm)

The Cloisters Collection, 1963 (63.12)

This extraordinary ivory cross is assembled from five pieces of walrus ivory and is carved on both sides with more than 100 figures and 60 inscriptions in Latin and Greek. Its complex imagery centers on the promise of salvation through Christ's sacrifice; this front view shows the cross as the Tree of Life, with holes still visible where the hands and feet of the missing body of Christ were originally attached. The sophistication of style and theological imagery suggest that the cross, among the finest in Romanesque art, was probably produced at the Abbey of Bury Saint Edmunds in eastern England, a thriving monastic center in the 12th century.





French (Auvergne), 1150–1200

VIRGIN AND CHILD

Oak with polychromy; H. 31 in. (78.7 cm)
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1916 (16.32.194)

This majestic sculpture of the Virgin and Child enthroned probably served as an object of devotion on an altar and perhaps also in processions. The Virgin represents the Throne of Wisdom, and the figure of Christ, which would originally have held a scroll or book, imparts the knowledge of the Word of God. This theological precept is effectively conveyed by the abstract, formal nature of the sculpture, with its rigid frontal poses, commanding facial expressions, and the calligraphic patterning of the crisply chiseled drapery folds.

Spanish (Palencia, Convent of Santa Clara de Astudillo), 1150–1200

CRUCIFIX

White oak and pine with polychromy;
H. 102 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (260 cm)
Samuel D. Lee Fund, 1935 (35.36ab)

According to tradition, this crucifix hung in the convent of Santa Clara near Palencia in northern Spain. The figure of Christ, crowned as King of Heaven, is made of white oak; the cross is of pine. It was probably intended to be hung high above the altar in front of the choir. Although the triumphant Christ is indicated by the open eyes and golden crown, the expression is one of profound pathos. Its great size, the strong face, and the preservation of much of the original polychromy and cross establish this as one of the most beautiful and important crucifixes of the Romanesque period.





Spanish (Burgos, Monastery of San Pedro de Cardena), ca. 1180

LEAF FROM A COMMENTARY ON THE APOCALYPSE BY BEATUS OF LIÉBANA

Tempera, gold, and ink on parchment;
17 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (44.8 × 29.8 cm)

Purchase, The Cloisters Collection, Rogers, and Harris Brisbane Dick Funds, and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1991 (1991.232.3 recto)

This leaf from an illuminated manuscript commentary on the Apocalypse shows Christ in majesty with angels, while below the angel of God orders Saint John to write the Apocalypse (The Book of Revelation). The painter's dramatic use of bold blocks of color and gold leaf contrasts with the refined linear treatment of figures with their distinctive teardrop-shaped drapery folds.

carminib' h' pangim. id est puritatis sue nū-
cum seruo suo pbatissimo saliet uirō. i. sal-
simo aplos omnium iohi directa est. & in te-
stimonium pibuit ubo di. uidelicet qui p-
dicant filium di. i. asserunt uiratem et te-
stimonium reddidit de dno ihu xpo que
cumq; uideat in illo et audiat ex illo.
unde in epla sua loquitur dicens. Quod uidi
mus et audiui. i. man' nre tractauerunt
de uerbo ure. i. uia adfuit. i. manifesta
unus uobis. **S** ciat qui legit et qui
audit uerba pphie. i. seruat que in ea scri-
pta sunt. Intellegi uult quod lectio non
faciat custodiam mandatorum. n. auditus
consumatio: opis pfectionem exhibeat. S;
solum sit pfectio: que legens et audieris
et ope facere coneris. **T**empus enim ppe
est. f. facientib' ea no longum temp' remu-
nerationis facit. f. uicem dno ee diuini
mias donum. Deinde orditur dictoz
suoz unum et dicit. **I**ohis septē oculis
que sunt in alia. Nūq; no tant' et talis
uir uni tantum pūnce. i. no omib' gen-
tibus diuine misterium pandere reuelatio-
nis incaluit. ut tam partium numerum
oculorum unus pūnce sua destinauer

Rhenish (Boppard-on-Rhine), 1440–47 WINDOWS WITH SAINTS

Pot-metal and white glass with vitreous paint
and silver stain; H. of entire panel:
148 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (377.2 cm), W. of each window:
28 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (72.7 cm)

The Cloisters Collection, 1937 (37.52.4–6)

These three windows of stained glass from the Carmelite church of Saint Severinus at Boppard-on-Rhine are part of an ensemble of six that were originally installed three over three to form a single tall window. After Napoleon invaded the Rhineland and secularized its monasteries, the stained glass of the church was removed and dispersed. The Cloisters panels constitute the only complete window of the extensive cycle at Boppard to have survived intact. Saint Catherine of Alexandria is depicted with the wheel and sword of her martyrdom in the panel at the left; Saint Dorothea receives a basket of roses from the Christ Child in the center; and at the right Saint Barbara holds the tower in which she was imprisoned. These lancets are one of the most brilliant ensembles of Late Gothic stained glass in the United States.





Pol, Jean, and Herman de Limbourg

French, active ca. 1400–1416

THE BELLES HEURES OF JEAN, DUKE OF BERRY

Tempera and gold leaf on parchment;
9 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (23.9 × 16.8 cm)

The Cloisters Collection, 1954
(54.1.1.fol. 191 recto)

Jean, duke of Berry, was one of the greatest art patrons of the Middle Ages, and he commissioned this exquisite book of hours from Pol de Limbourg and his brothers, who worked exclusively for him. The duke demanded exceptionally high quality, as seen in the perfect vellum, the unusual and elaborate decoration, and above all in the luminous, vibrant paintings. The book has 94 full-page miniatures, and many smaller ones, including calendar vignettes and border illuminations. The Limbourgs' style is characterized by meticulous detail, beautiful color, and masterful narration. This scene shows Saint Paul the Hermit watching a young Christian tempted by a lewd woman, an episode that so horrified Paul he abandoned the world and fled to the desert.

Southern Netherlandish (Brussels), 1495–1505

THE UNICORN TAPESTRIES: THE UNICORN IN CAPTIVITY

Wool, silk, metallic threads;
12 ft. 1 in. × 8 ft. (368 × 252 cm)
The Cloisters Collection, Gift of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1937 (37.80.6)

This tapestry, showing the unicorn enclosed in a garden fence under a pomegranate tree, is the seventh in a series of seven representing the Hunt of the Unicorn. The legend of the unicorn, in which it is captured as it rests its head in the lap of a virgin, parallels the Passion of Christ, who surrendered his divine nature and became human through the Virgin. This scene shows the resurrected unicorn after the hunt is over. The mingling of Christian symbolism, popular legends, and flora and fauna associated with love and fertility suggests that the tapestries may have been designed to celebrate a marriage.





Robert Campin

South Netherlandish (Tournai), ca. 1378–1444

TRIPTYCH WITH THE ANNUNCIATION

Oil on wood; central panel:

25¼ × 24⅞ in. (64.1 × 63.2 cm); each wing:

25⅝ × 10¾ in. (64.5 × 27.3 cm)

The Cloisters Collection, 1956 (56.70)

This intimate triptych, which dates from about 1425, is traditionally known as the Mérode Altarpiece, after the family that owned it during the nineteenth century. It illustrates the moment when the archangel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that

she has been chosen by God to be the mother of Christ. The patrons of the painting gaze upon this miraculous event from one of the side panels, while Joseph, busy at his carpenter's bench, occupies the other wing. Campin's fascination with the natural and domestic world dominates his telling of the sacred story. He meticulously renders even the smallest details in an innovative technique combining translucent oil overlay on water-based opaque pigments. The resulting optical effects enhance Campin's interpretation of the Virgin's private chamber as an affluent fifteenth-century interior filled with household

appointments and goods similar to those that the patron would have known. Yet Campin was essentially guided in his choice of objects by the symbolic needs of the story. The brass laver, for example, signifies Mary's purity, as does the Madonna lily in the maiolica pitcher. As an object of private devotion, this painting would have been integrated into the furnishings of the owners' private quarters, where its hinged wings could be opened and closed according to the daily cadence of private prayers or following the traditions of the Christian calendar.



German (Nuremberg), ca. 1500

EWER WITH WILD MAN FINIAL

Silver, silver gilt, and enamel; H. 25 in.

(63.5 cm)

The Cloisters Collection, 1953 (53.20.2)

This ewer with a wild man finial is one of a pair in the Museum's collection. Holding the traditional attributes of a club and an armorial shield, the wild man announced and protected the ewer's ownership,

possibly that of Hartmann von Stockheim, German master of the Order of Teutonic Knights, a powerful force in Germany at the turn of the 16th century. The wild man was a mythical woodland creature, once regarded as brutish but by this time perceived as the embodiment of Germanic strength and endurance. Such a standard would have been appropriate for an order that was martial in origin.



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الحمد لله الذي جعل القرآن
موسى بن جعفر عليه السلام

الحمد لله الذي جعل القرآن
موسى بن جعفر عليه السلام

الحمد لله الذي جعل القرآن
موسى بن جعفر عليه السلام



The Islamic World



WORKS OF ISLAMIC ART range in style from the purely abstract to the naturalistic, and their materials from humble clay to jeweled gold. Some are strikingly immediate, their appeal almost unapproachably refined and subtle. Among them are delightful characterizations of extraordinary people and of bounding and roaring animals. However luxuriously ornamental and worldly, many of these pictures and objects take spiritual flight. Their provenances—from Spain to India and far beyond—are as disparate as their styles and moods; yet they come together harmoniously, unified by a common language inspired by the new faith.

Islam (“submission to God”) began in Arabia, a starkly beautiful land of scrub and desert, of endless horizons and starry skies, a land where survival was hard and required discipline and order but that inspired poetry and thought. The beginnings of Islamic art can be placed a few decades after the death of Muhammad the Prophet, born in sixth-century Mecca, who experienced at the age of forty a profound revelation of Allah, the one and unique God, as both creator of the world and its judge. The Qur’an, Islam’s holy book, is the living word of God as revealed to his prophet Muhammad. Islam was soon established not only as a world religion but as a rapidly expanding community with its own system of government, laws, and institutions.

By 732 the Muslim world included all of Arabia as well as Persia, Mesopotamia, Sind, Egypt, and the rest of North Africa and Spain. Cultures as disparate as those of Transoxiana, North Africa and Spain, Turkey, Persia, and India were transformed by the new faith and in turn contributed to its character.

The importance of the mosque in extending vital patronage and guidance to Muslim architects, calligraphers, and artist-craftsmen cannot be overestimated. Although mosques vary in style according to time and place, all include certain essentials, such as the mihrab, the niche indicating the direction of Mecca.

Mosques also contain smaller, movable objects that often influenced and were influenced by the techniques, patterns, and styles of comparable articles for secular use. Among these are the hanging lamps of glass often decorated with colorful enamels and donated by rulers or wealthy patrons. Equally appealing to the eye, and therefore desirable for palaces and homes, are the rugs stretched over the floor.

Clearly linked to the organic, meandering forms of vegetal arabesque are the geometric patterns upon which Islamic designers and artist-craftsmen composed infinite variations. Compelling in perfection of proportion and intricacy of rhythms, these crystalline configurations have affinities to scientific and mathematical speculation, perhaps Islam’s greatest contribution to human knowledge.

The Museum’s collection of Islamic art, which dates from the seventh to the nineteenth century, reflects the diversity and range of Islamic culture. In 1891 the Museum received its first major group of Islamic objects, a bequest of Edward C. Moore. Since then the collection has grown through gifts, bequests, and purchases; it has also received important artifacts from the Museum-sponsored excavations at Nishapur, Iran, in 1935–39 and 1947. The Museum now offers perhaps the most comprehensive exhibition of Islamic art on permanent view anywhere in the world. Outstanding holdings include the collections of glass and metalwork from Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia, ceramics and tiles from Persia and Turkey, royal miniatures from the courts of Persia and Mughal India, and carpets from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

(OPPOSITE)

Iranian, ca. 1354

PRAYER NICHE (MIHRAB)

Composite body, glazed; 11 ft. 3 in. × 7 ft. 6 in. (3.43 × 2.88 m)

Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1939 (39.20)

This superb prayer niche, which comes from a *madrasa* (theological school) in Isfahan, is extraordinary not only for the beauty of its mosaic tile work but also for its variegated inscriptions. The mihrab, which now shows some areas of restoration, is composed of small pieces of ceramic fired at temperatures high enough to bring out the brilliance of the glaze and then fitted together to form geometric and floral patterns and inscriptions. The inscription in the outer panel contains a Qur’anic saying that speaks of the duties of the faithful and the heavenly recompense of those who build mosques. The inscription in the niche states that “the mosque is the house of every pious person.”

(LEFT)

Iranian, 11th century

ROUNDEL

Gold; Diam. 2¹³/₁₆ in. (7.2 cm)

The Alice and Nasli Heeramaneck

Collection, Gift of Alice Heeramaneck, 1980 (1980.344)

This gold roundel, an object of marvelous delicacy and beauty, combines features associated with both Iran and the Syro-Egyptian region, thus enlarging our understanding of the nature of medieval Islamic jewelry. The filigree construction laid on a backing of narrow strips of gold is typically Syro-Egyptian, but the solid sheet-constructed back and the concentric rings of narrow sheet separating front from back are Iranian. The original function of the roundel is not known.



Iranian, Seljuq period, 1182
INCENSE BURNER IN FELINE FORM

Bronze; 36 in. (91.4 cm)
 Rogers Fund, 1951 (51.56)

One of the largest and stateliest of all Islamic bronze animals, this incense burner is imbued with vitality and humor. The Seljuqs were a dynamic Turkish people from inner Asia who gained control of Khorasan, in eastern Iran, in 1034. The head, body, and limbs of the feline are abstracted into sleek static forms, powerful but not threatening. A guardian rather than an attacker, this noble beast has exquisitely proportioned ears, eyes, tongue, and streamlined whiskerlike ridges. The pierced body, mask, and tail are adorned with elegant arabesques, and the kufic letters bear the name of the patron, the date, wishes for happiness, and blessings. This incense burner probably took pride of place in the center of a Seljuq prince's banquet hall.

(OPPOSITE)

Turkish (Istanbul), ca. 1525–30

SWORD (JATAGAN)

Steel, walrus ivory, gold, silver, rubies, turquoise, pearl; L. 23 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (59.4 cm)
Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 1993 (1993.14)

This sword, one of the earliest known *jatagans*—a Turkish short-sword with a distinctive double-curved blade—is a stellar example of Ottoman goldsmiths' work at the court of Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–66). The sword presents a rich variety of precious materials that elegantly demonstrates the virtuoso talents of the bladesmith, ivory carver, goldsmith, and jeweler. The grip of walrus

ivory is inlaid with gold cloud bands, and the pommel is embellished with gold flowers studded with turquoise and rubies. Each side of the blade is thickly encrusted in gold with scenes of combat between a dragon and a phoenix. The relief is minutely detailed; the eyes of the creatures are set with rubies and the dragon's teeth are of silver. Like the cloud bands, the dragon-and-phoenix motif is of central Asian origin and was adopted by Persian artists, eventually passing into Turkish art. This sword can be attributed to the Istanbul workshop of Ahmed Tekeli, a jeweler of reputed Persian origin who signed a very similar *jatagan* made for Suleyman in 1526 (Topkapi Palace Collection, Istanbul).

Indian, Deccan, early 17th century

ROUNDEL

Sandstone; Diam. 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (47 cm)
Edward Pearce Casey Fund, 1985 (1985.240.1)

This sandstone roundel clearly shows the consummate skill of both the calligrapher and the stonecutter. It repeats the Arabic invocation *Ya 'aziz* "O Mighty!" (one of the 99 Most Beautiful Names of God) eight times in mirrored Thuluth script. The calligraphy is reminiscent of the inscriptions in the Ibrahim Rauza, the mausoleum of Sultan Ibrahim 'Adilshah (r. 1580–1627) in Bijapur. The number eight, in addition to its geometrical qualities, points also to eternal bliss and the eight paradises of which Islamic tradition speaks.





Spanish, early Caliphal period, 11th century
PLAQUE

Ivory, stones (quartzs), and traces of pigment,
4¼ × 8 in. (10.8 × 20.3 cm)

John Stewart Kennedy Fund, 1913 (13.141)

This charming plaque, originally one of the four sides of a rectangular casket, belongs to a group of ivories made in Islamic Spain during the reign of the Umayyad caliphs (756–1031). Because of this dynasty's Syrian roots, many motifs found in these ivories can be traced back to that area. The leaf arabesques here are a stylized version of the vine-and-acanthus scroll popular in late antique ornament, and prototypes for the animated figures can be found in early Islamic (Syrian or Egyptian) textiles, where birds, animals, and human beings of similar character are also paired on either side of stylized trees. The influence of textiles can be seen in the way the pattern in the overall design is repeated without change.



Eastern Iranian (Khorasan, probably Herat),
ca. 1180–1210

EWER

Brass, silver, and bitumen; H. 15½ in.
(39.4 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1944 (44.15)

The exquisitely inlaid surface of this elegant ewer, used for ablutions, carries a variety of subtle decoration. Arabic inscriptions on the neck and shoulder in kufic and human-headed *naskh* scripts express blessings and good wishes to the unnamed owner. The 13 flutes of the body are decorated with bands of animal-headed scrolls, which surround medallions that contain signs of the zodiac accompanied by their ruling planets. The flutes are topped by a row of harpies in high relief, and near the bottom of the ewer is a row of repoussé birds. A frieze of coursing animals is located on the foot.



Syrian or Egyptian, late 13th–early 14th century

MAMLUK GLASS BOTTLE

Glass; H. 17 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (43.5 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1941 (41.150)

“Mamluk glass” is almost synonymous with the magnificent enamel-painted mosque lanterns that were produced in profusion during the rule of the Mamluk dynasty in Syria and Egypt (1250–1517). But the artists of that period fashioned other glass objects, such as this bottle with its elegant shape and surpassingly rich and varied decoration exhibiting foreign artistic influences and innovations. Although the Mamluks were enemies of the Mongol (Ilkhanid) dynasty ruling in Greater Iran, related to the Yüan rulers in China, they were not impervious to Chinese and Persian influences. The linear drawing of the dense leafy patterns on the bottle’s sloping shoulders is indebted to Chinese art, as is the phoenix that curls around the bottle’s neck, while the frieze of mounted warriors is related to contemporary Persian miniature painting.

Probably Spanish, 13th–14th century
PAGE FROM A QUR'AN

Ink, colors, and gold on vellum; 21 × 22 in.
(53.3 × 55.9 cm)
Rogers Fund, 1942 (42.63)

This beautiful sheet from a Qur'an made in Spain or North Africa is written in the *maghribi* (or "Western") style of Arabic script. This is easily recognizable by its

rather thin, high letters, which sometimes end in buttonlike rounds, and also by the long, swinging endings of certain letters. On this page, two round designs at the margin mark verses. The first line of text, outlined in black ink and filled with gold, contains the title of the 39th *sura* (chapter) of the Qur'an. The large medallion at the end of the line underscores the decorative aspect of the chapter heading.



Turkish, mid-16th century

**TUGHRA OF SULTAN SULEYMAN
THE MAGNIFICENT**

Opaque watercolor and gold on paper;
20½ × 25⅞ in. (52.1 × 64.5 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1938 (38.149.1)

The Ottoman tughra (calligraphic emblem) became largely standardized in general appearance at least as early as the 15th century, and—as this sumptuous example demonstrates—it allowed calligraphers and illuminators to display their talents to great effect. Almost all of the orthographically functional lines of this tughra are concentrated in the area of dense activity at the lower right, which gives the name and patronymic of the sultan as well as the formulaic “ever victorious.” The exaggerated verticals with their descending, swaying appendages are essentially decorative, as are the elaborate, sweeping curves that form the large loops to the left and their extensions to the right. All imperial decrees were headed by the sultan’s tughra. The remainder of the document is missing here.



Iranian or Transoxianan, 10th century
BOWL

Earthenware, slip-painted and glazed;
Diam. 18 in. (45.7 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1965 (65.106.2)

Perhaps the most outstanding examples of the use of calligraphy on pottery are to be found among wares from Nishapur and Samarkand. In the tenth century Nishapur was one of the great centers of Islamic art, and its finest ceramics were slip-painted wares on which elegantly painted Arabic inscriptions are the principal and frequently the only decoration. This bowl—the largest and perhaps the most important Islamic ceramic bowl in the Metropolitan Museum—bears an inscription in kufic script stating: “Planning in advance protects you from regret; prosperity and peace.” The elegance of the design and of the potting in combination with the size of the bowl make this a true tour de force of the potter’s art.





Iranian (Tabriz), Safavid period, ca. 1520–22
THE FEAST OF SADA

Leaf from the *Shahnama* of Shah Tahmasp,
 attributed to Sultan Muhammad

Ink, colors, and gold on paper; 9½ × 9½ in.
 (24.1 × 23.2 cm)

Gift of Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., 1970

(1970.301.2)

Sultan Muhammad painted this humorous but visionary picture for the first Safavid ruler, Shah Ismaʿil (r. 1502–24), and his young son, Prince (later Shah) Tahmasp (r. 1524–76). It comes from the grandest of all royal copies of the *Shahnama* (Book of the Kings). The Feast of Sada celebrates the discovery of fire by one of the legendary early kings, Hushang, who sighted a hideous apparition and hurled a rock at it. The creature vanished, but the royal missile struck a boulder. Sparks flashed, so impressing Hushang that he initiated fire worship. That evening he assembled his courtiers and their animals, discoursed on the potential of fire, and—using the newly discovered fire for cooking—celebrated the feast known ever since as Sada.



Indian, Mughal period, ca. 1645

SHAH JAHAN ON HORSEBACK

Ink, colors, and gold on paper; 15½ × 10¼ in.
(38.9 × 25.7 cm)

Purchase, Rogers Fund and The Kevorkian
Foundation Gift, 1955 (55.121.10.21v)

This magnificent equestrian portrait of Shah Jahan (1592–1666), a leaf from the Shah Jahan Album, is attributed to the artist Payag. The image of the emperor epitomizes the imperial splendor of the “Grand Mogul,” an epithet commonly used by Europeans when referring to the ruler of the Mughal dynasty. The richness and refinement of the saddle, the saddlecloth, and the emperor’s costume and arms, as well as the nobility of his mount, are in perfect harmony with the regal grandeur of the emperor’s face. He was the fifth emperor of the Mughal dynasty and the son of Jahangir, against whom he rebelled. During Shah Jahan’s reign Mughal power reached its apogee, and it was also the golden period of Islamic architecture in India. Shah Jahan built the Taj Mahal at Agra as a memorial to his wife, Mumtaz Mahall (“the ornament of the palace”), and he also erected the Pearl Mosque in Agra Fort.



(DETAIL)

Iranian (probably Herat), mid-16th century
THE EMPEROR'S CARPET

Silk warp and weft, wool pile;
 24 ft. 8 in. × 10 ft. 10 in. (7.52 × 3.3 m)
 Rogers Fund, 1943 (43.121.1)

Court artists, designers, skilled weavers and dyers, and ancillary helpers cooperated to make this carpet one of the glories of weaving. Its design combines refined arabesques and scrolling vines with cloud bands, and floral wonders with dynamic representations of fabulous beasts and animals and pairs of pheasantlike birds. In the center four large palmettes in a lozenge-shaped formation guide the underlying system of dark-blue spirals, regulating the placement, direction, and size of the complex floral and leaf elements. Certain symbolic aspects of the carpet's design have been noted by scholars, especially the comparison to a springtime garden with its allusion to the Garden of Paradise. It is called the Emperor's Carpet because it is supposed to have been in the collection of the Hapsburg emperors.

Turkish (Bursa or Istanbul), late 16th century
PRAYER RUG

Silk warp and weft, wool and cotton pile;
 5 ft. 5 in. × 4 ft. 2 in. (1.65 × 1.27 m)
 The James F. Ballard Collection, Gift of James F. Ballard, 1922 (22.100.51)

The Ballard prayer rug is the most outstanding example of its kind in the Metropolitan's collection. The field of the rug shows a portico with three pointed arches that rest on columns decorated with overlapping chevrons whose octagonal bases are placed on small plinths. A mosque lamp adorns the central and widest arch, the lamp alluding to the Sura of Light (24. verse 35). A row of crenellations framing domed pavilions or tomb towers rises above the spandrels, which are decorated with typical Ottoman blossoms and arabesques. Bouquets of naturalistic flowers taken from a typical Ottoman repertoire—including tulips, carnations, anemones, and roses—decorate the spaces between the bases along the floor line of the portico.





(DETAIL)

Blade: *Persian*, 17th century

Grip: *Indian*, 18th century

Mount: *Turkish*, 19th century

SABER AND SCABBARD

Steel, gold, gilt brass, jade, diamonds, emeralds, and pearls; saber: L. 39 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

(101 cm)

Gift of Giulia P. Morosini, in memory of her father, Giovanni P. Morosini, 1923 (23.232.2ab)

This extraordinarily ornate saber and its scabbard form an intriguing composite of elements from three important Islamic

centers. The blade of watered steel was forged in Persia and is dated 1688. The grip of pale green jade, inlaid with sprays of jeweled flowers, was fashioned in 18th-century Mughal India. According to tradition, the guard and scabbard mountings of gilt metal studded with emeralds and diamonds, as well as the matching jeweled tassel of pearls, were made in Istanbul in 1876, when the elements were assembled to create the ceremonial weapon intended for use at the enthronement of Sultan Murad V.



Spanish, Nasrid period, late 15th century

PARADE HELMET

Steel, overlaid with gold and silver and inlaid with cloisonné enamels; H. 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (20 cm)

From the Lord Astor of Hever Collection, Purchase, The Vincent Astor Foundation Gift, 1983 (1983.413)

This helmet is a rare surviving example of Nasrid armor. The shape of the helmet is that of a Spanish or Italian sallet, but the decoration is decidedly un-European. The steel surface is covered with gold and silver

leaf tooled with geometric designs and stylized Arabic inscriptions and is set with cloisonné enamels, a type of decoration that has close parallels with sword fittings and jewelry of the late Nasrid period. The lavish decoration and the fact that the bowl is pierced to receive the enamels indicates that the helmet was intended exclusively for parade use. The Nasrids ruled from Granada over the last Muslim kingdom of Spain, and today they are chiefly remembered for having built the palaces that constitute the Alhambra.

Syrian, 1707

THE NUR AL-DIN ROOM

Gift of The Hagop Kevorkian Fund, 1970
(1970.170)

This elegantly decorated room from Damascus, Syria, served as a reception area for the patriarch of the family and his male guests. It is divided into two areas: a small anteroom, where the guests left their shoes (in photograph below) and a raised, high, narrow room (opposite), where the visitors

reclined on cushions and partook of refreshments. The fountain in the entrance reinforced the importance of water in the life of the household. The sound of falling water, the subdued light filtered through the colored glass in the windows, and the comfortable atmosphere created a soothing calm for all gatherings. Open niches held books and favored objects. The walls and cornice panels inscribed in Arabic contain poetry wishing abundance and a good life for the owner.





THE RENAISSANCE





Southern Europe



MEDIEVAL ART HAD LARGELY been commissioned by monarchs, by nobles, and—above all—by the Church, whose doctrines it expounded in form and color. But the art of the Renaissance, in Italy, at least, was mostly ordered by the citizens of republics, which had much in common with the city-states of ancient Greece. The great “schools” (established regional groups of artists with their own local traditions and ideals) rose and flourished among the rich mercantile societies of the center and north, especially the dominant republics of Florence and Venice, and to a lesser degree those of Siena, Pisa, and Lucca.

As early as the fourteenth century a rebirth (renaissance) of antiquity had occurred in the form of humanism in scholarship and poetry. The merchants and banking classes, who were the patrons of Renaissance art, also poured their golden florins into the formation of libraries, which preserved in manuscript form the great works of ancient literature.

Italian art remained Gothic in architecture and sculpture and Byzantine in painting throughout most of the thirteenth century, but by the time of Petrarch in the fourteenth, Giotto had created a new pictorial style, blending elements derived from both Gothic and Byzantine sources with a fresh understanding of human life and character, a new narrative technique, and a new conception of form. Unanimously, the Italian artists of the Renaissance regarded him as the founder of their new vision. It was not until the fifteenth century that all the arts began to turn systematically to Roman antiquity (they knew nothing of the Greeks) for their inspiration, so that ancient ideals were embodied in architecture and sculpture, combined with entirely original contemporary concepts. Painting was on its own because there was little ancient painting to be seen. The gap between painting and sculpture was bridged in the work of the short-lived Masaccio (1401–1428), who for the first time achieved painted forms revealed in light proceeding from a distinct and recognizable source.

The late fifteenth century saw the beginning of ominous social changes. A new, wealthy class had gathered around the Medici family, who ruled Florence from a palace crammed with works of art. Artistic currents were divided: Gothic was dead and forgotten, but so indeed was the monumental naturalism of Masaccio and his followers. The favorite artist of Lorenzo the Magnificent was not Botticelli but Antonio Pollaiuolo, painter, sculptor, metalworker, and engraver.

Both the Gothic and the Byzantine lasted longer in Venice because of the city’s trade with still-Gothic Germany and with the Byzantine Empire. Partly through its material splendor and partly through its position on lagoons in an environment of sea air, glittering water, and distant mountains, Venice moved in directions quite opposite to those of Florence—in fact, to an unprecedented understanding of color and light, brought to brilliance by such masters as Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese.

Social and political changes transforming Italy at the close of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth placed new demands on the artist and fostered a new style, known today as the High Renaissance. Short-lived though the style was in central

(OVERLEAF)

Detail of Botticelli’s *Annunciation*

(see page 104)

(OPPOSITE)

Raphael

Marchigian, 1483–1520

MADONNA AND CHILD

ENTHRONED WITH SAINTS, 1504–5

Tempera and gold on wood; main panel:
67 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 67 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (172.4 × 172.4 cm)

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1916 (16.30ab)

This is the main panel and lunette from a relatively early work by Raphael, also known as the *Colonna Altarpiece*, painted for the convent of Sant’Antonio da Padova at Perugia. He began the work when he was barely 20 years old, just before he left for Florence in 1504, and he completed it the following year after he returned to Perugia. The influence of his teacher Perugino can be seen in the conservative composition. Nevertheless, Raphael has infused into the stiffly posed group a breadth and dignity that reflects his knowledge of the work of Fra Bartolommeo in Florence. Particularly beautiful is the way the figures fill the curved shape of the lunette. Flanking the Madonna and Child with the infant Saint John the Baptist are Saints Peter, Catherine, Cecilia(?), and Paul.

(LEFT)

Moderno

Italian, active 15th–16th century

PLAQUETTE: HERCULES AND
ANTAEUS

Bronze, H. 3 in. (7.6 cm)

Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.1.1346)



Giotto

Florentine, 1266/67–1337

THE EPIPHANY, ca. 1320

Tempera on wood, gold ground;

17 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (45.1 × 43.8 cm)

John Stewart Kennedy Fund, 1911 (11.126.1)

Giotto of Florence was the founder of Renaissance painting. This picture, which shows the Adoration of the Magi in the foreground and the Annunciation to the Shepherds in the background, belongs to a series of seven panels depicting the life of Christ. When it was painted, Giotto was at the height of his powers and enjoyed an unparalleled reputation throughout Italy. The clearly organized space, arranged like a stepped stage with the stable viewed from below, and the simplified shapes of the figures are typical of Giotto's innovative naturalism, as is the way in which the oldest king has removed his crown, knelt down, and impetuously lifted the Child from the manger.

Italy—hardly more than twenty years—its greatest masters, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael, established enduring norms of grandeur, harmony, and unity.

Well before the Sack of Rome by the imperial army of Charles V in 1527, the harmony of the High Renaissance social order had been threatened. Florentine independence was at an end, and the republic survived in name only. In response to these disruptions, a new style of art, known today as Mannerism, soon appeared. Mannerists rejected most of the qualities that had been essential to the High Renaissance; the strange, the novel, the unexpected were preferred to the normative, the serene.

The autocratic states of Europe, including Spain, experienced no indigenous Renaissance in the visual arts. But by the beginning of the sixteenth century, imported Italian ideas were fashionable everywhere, grafted onto native, usually Gothic forms. In its problems and solutions, the Renaissance remains intensely attractive to the late twentieth century. If the disturbed nature of Mannerism is especially accessible to our own era, the ideal perfection of the High Renaissance is a refuge, and the ceaseless experimentations of the Early Renaissance an inspiration.

The Museum's holdings in Renaissance works of art are housed in several curatorial departments, including European Paintings, European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, Arms and Armor, Drawings, Prints and Illustrated Books, and Musical Instruments. These collections have been enriched over the years by extraordinary gifts and bequests from such generous donors as Benjamin Altman, Jules Bache, George Blumenthal, Mr. and Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, Robert Lehman, Jack and Belle Linsky, J. Pierpont Morgan, and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman.

Simone Martini

Sieneese, active by 1315, died 1344

SAINT ANDREW, ca. 1326

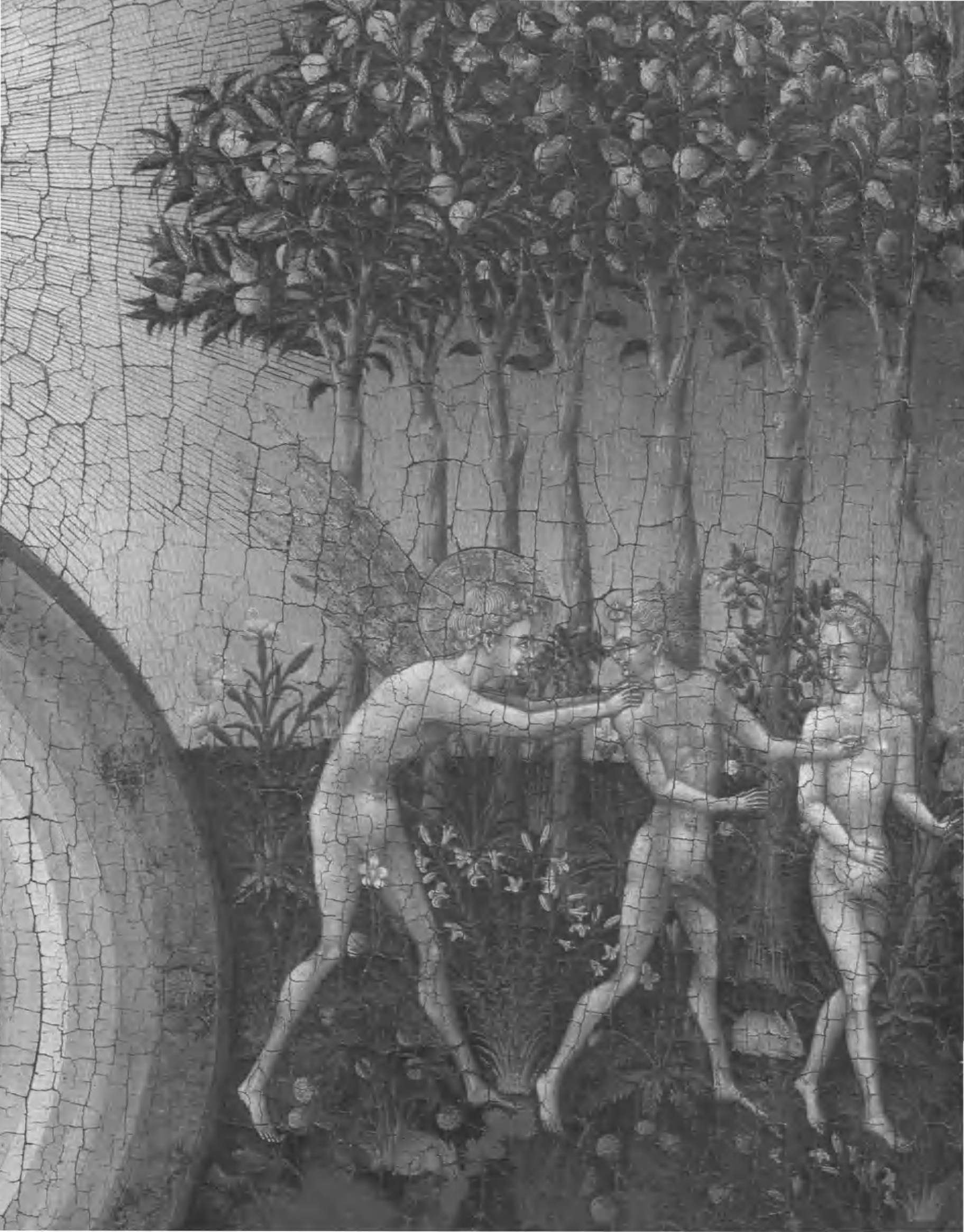
Tempera on wood, gold ground;

22 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (57.2 × 37.8 cm)

Gift of George Blumenthal, 1941 (41.100.23)

The most influential Sieneese painter of the early 14th century was Simone Martini. His Gothic style, which combined extraordinary descriptive subtlety with decorative beauty, spread throughout Europe. This panel, one of five belonging to a portable altarpiece (two companion panels are in the Robert Lehman Collection), is an excellent example of the delicacy and richness of Simone's work. The drawing of the hands is remarkably sensitive, and the folds of the pink robe, modeled in green, are beautifully worked. Especially notable is the rich tooling of the gold background and the rare, original frame.





Giovanni di Paolo

Sieneſe, active by 1426, died 1482

**THE CREATION AND THE
EXPULSION OF ADAM AND EVE
FROM PARADISE, ca. 1445**

Tempera and gold on wood; 18¼ × 20½ in.
(46.4 × 52.1 cm)

Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.I.31)

This extraordinary panel is widely admired for its brilliant colors, curious iconography, and mystical vitality. At the left, God the Father, supported by 12 blue cherubim, flies

downward, pointing with his right hand at a circular *mappamondo*, which fills the lower half of the scene. The representation of earth is surrounded by concentric circles, including a green ring (for water), a blue ring (for air), a red ring (for fire), the circles of the seven planets, and the circle of the Zodiac. On the right, in a separate scene set in a meadow filled with flowers, Adam and Eve walk to the right against a line of seven trees with golden fruit. Their heads turn back toward a naked angel, who expels them from Paradise. Below them spring the

four rivers of Paradise, which extend to the base of the picture.

This panel is a fragment from the predella of an altarpiece painted for the church of San Domenico in Siena and now in the Uffizi in Florence. Another panel from the same predella is also in the Museum's collection. The influence of the International Gothic style, especially French miniature painting, can be seen in the figures of the angel, Adam, and Eve, and in the details of flora and fauna.



Andrea Mantegna

Paduan, ca. 1430–1506

THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS, ca. 1451–53

Tempera on canvas transferred from wood;
overall: 15¼ × 21⅞ in. (40 × 55.6 cm)

Purchase, Anonymous Gift, 1932 (32.130.2)

A prodigy, Andrea Mantegna established his reputation when he was barely 20 years old. This painting is an early work, but already

his highly individual style is evident. The hard, precise drawing, the astonishing clarity of even the smallest details in the distant landscape, and the refined, pure color are typical of his work, as are the intensely serious expressions of the figures. The *Adoration* seems to have been painted for Borso d'Este, ruler of Ferrara, and the coarse realism of the shepherds probably reflects Flemish paintings collected by the Este.





Sassetta

Siennese, active by 1423, died 1450

THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI, ca. 1435

Tempera and gold on wood; $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{3}{4}$ in.
(21.6 × 29.9 cm)

Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of
Maitland F. Griggs, 1943 (43.98.1)

This panel showing the three magi and their retinue on their way to Bethlehem was originally the upper part of a small Adoration of the Magi now in the Palazzo Chigi-Saraceni in Siena. (The upper edge of

the stable roof is just visible along the bottom right edge.) Sassetta was one of the most enchanting narrative painters of the 15th century, and although this picture is only a fragment, it is one of his most popular works. He has imagined the magis' journey as a contemporary pageant, including fashionably attired figures and courtly details such as the hunting falcon on a man's arm and the monkey riding on the back of a donkey. The ostriches on the hill symbolize the miraculous birth of Christ.



Fra Filippo Lippi

Florentine, ca. 1406–1469

MADONNA AND CHILD
ENTHRONED WITH TWO ANGELS,
ca. 1437

Tempera and gold on wood transferred from wood; arched top: 48 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

(122.6 × 62.9 cm)

The Jules Bache Collection, 1949 (49.7.9)

This early work by Filippo Lippi is the center panel of a triptych, the wings of which are in the Accademia Albertina in Turin. Although made of three separate panels, the triptych was unified by a continuous wall and uniform lighting. The figures and the elaborate marble throne have a massive quality deriving from the artist's study of the frescoes of Masaccio in the church of Santa Maria del Carmine, where Lippi was a monk. The rose held by the Virgin symbolizes her purity. The book held by the infant Christ is inscribed with a passage from the book of Ecclesiastes 24:19.

Giovanni Bellini

Venetian, active by 1459, died 1516

MADONNA AND CHILD, 1480s

Oil on wood, 35 × 28 in. (88.9 × 71.1 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1908 (08.183.1)

Bellini was one of the great geniuses of the Renaissance; his use of color to achieve rich, atmospheric effects became the hallmark of Venetian art of the Renaissance. In addition to large altarpieces, Bellini also painted devotional images of the Madonna and Child for domestic settings. In spite of their modest size and conventional theme, these paintings invariably exhibit a remarkably fresh, inventive approach. The Madonna in this painting is aligned with the vertical axis of the picture, but the rust-colored cloth of honor and the position of the tenderly held Child introduce a daring asymmetry. The beautifully painted landscape, incorporating a distant view of the Alps, serves to balance the composition and underscores the still, poignant mood of the picture. The quince held by the Child is a symbol of the Resurrection.







Botticelli

Florentine, 1444/ 45–1510

THE ANNUNCIATION, ca. 1485

Tempera and gold on wood; $7\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{3}{8}$ in.

(19.1 $\times$ 31.4 cm)

Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.1. 74)

This picture is one of the jewels of 15th-century Italian art, embodying the achievements that made Florence so famous and influential. The classical architectural setting is carefully rendered in linear perspective, one of the great discoveries of Florentine artists. The figures of the Virgin and the archangel Gabriel, virtually mirror images of each other, are separated by the center row of pillars, but they are subtly drawn together into a unified composition by the rays of light carrying God's message from heaven. The complex composition, as well as the lyrical quality of the drawing and the transparency of the colors, are characteristic of Botticelli's mature style.



Vittore Carpaccio

Venetian, ca. 1455–1523/26

THE MEDITATION ON THE PASSION, ca. 1510

Oil and tempera on wood; 27 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 34 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.
(70.5 × 86.7 cm)

John Stewart Kennedy Fund, 1911 (II.118)

Carpaccio is best known for the extensive narrative cycles he painted for Venetian confraternities, but he also produced a number of individual religious works for private collectors that are distinguished for their haunting stillness and richly descriptive approach. One of the most

beautiful of these paintings is this depiction of the Old Testament figure Job and of Saint Jerome as a hermit meditating on the body of the dead Christ. Inscribed in Hebrew on the marble block where Job sits are the words “I know that my redeemer liveth.” Numerous details underscore the theme of death and resurrection: the bones next to Job, the crown of thorns propped up against Christ’s broken throne, the small bird that flies upward from Christ to symbolize the Resurrection. Even the lavishly painted landscape carries the theme by appearing desolate on the left and lush and open on the right.

Antonio Pollaiuolo

Florentine, 1429–1498

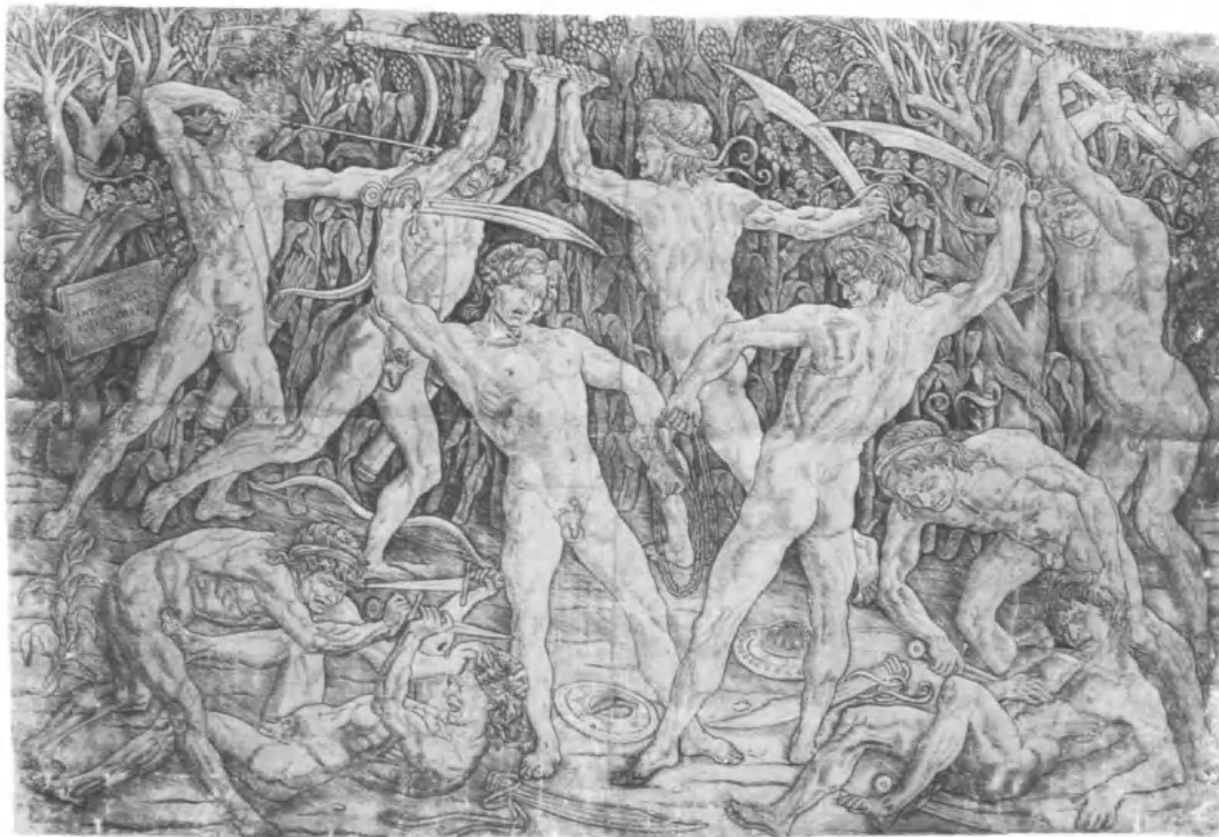
BATTLE OF THE NAKED MEN,
ca. 1490?

Engraving (second state of two);

15 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (39.7 × 59.1 cm)

Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1917
(17.50.99)

Whether a specific event is meant to be portrayed in this battle or whether the composition with its nude figures in different active poses is more in the nature of an exercise is uncertain, as is the date when the print was made and even the identity of its engraver. Nonetheless, Pollaiuolo's ambitious, large-scale composition has always fascinated viewers, and this print is a landmark in 15th-century Italian engraving.





Leonardo da Vinci

Italian, 1452–1519

STUDIES FOR A NATIVITY

Pen and brown ink, over preliminary sketches in metalpoint, on pink prepared paper, 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (19.3 × 16.2 cm)
Rogers Fund, 1917 (17.142.1)

Leonardo left hundreds of notebooks filled with drawings in which he explored ideas,

compositions, or inventions. His curiosity led him to sketch and puzzle out diverse subjects, such as running water, growing plants, and human anatomy. The series of sketches on this sheet show Leonardo exploring a theme that would later emerge as the *Madonna of the Rocks*, in which the Virgin kneels over the infant Jesus, raising her right hand in benediction.

Tullio Lombardo

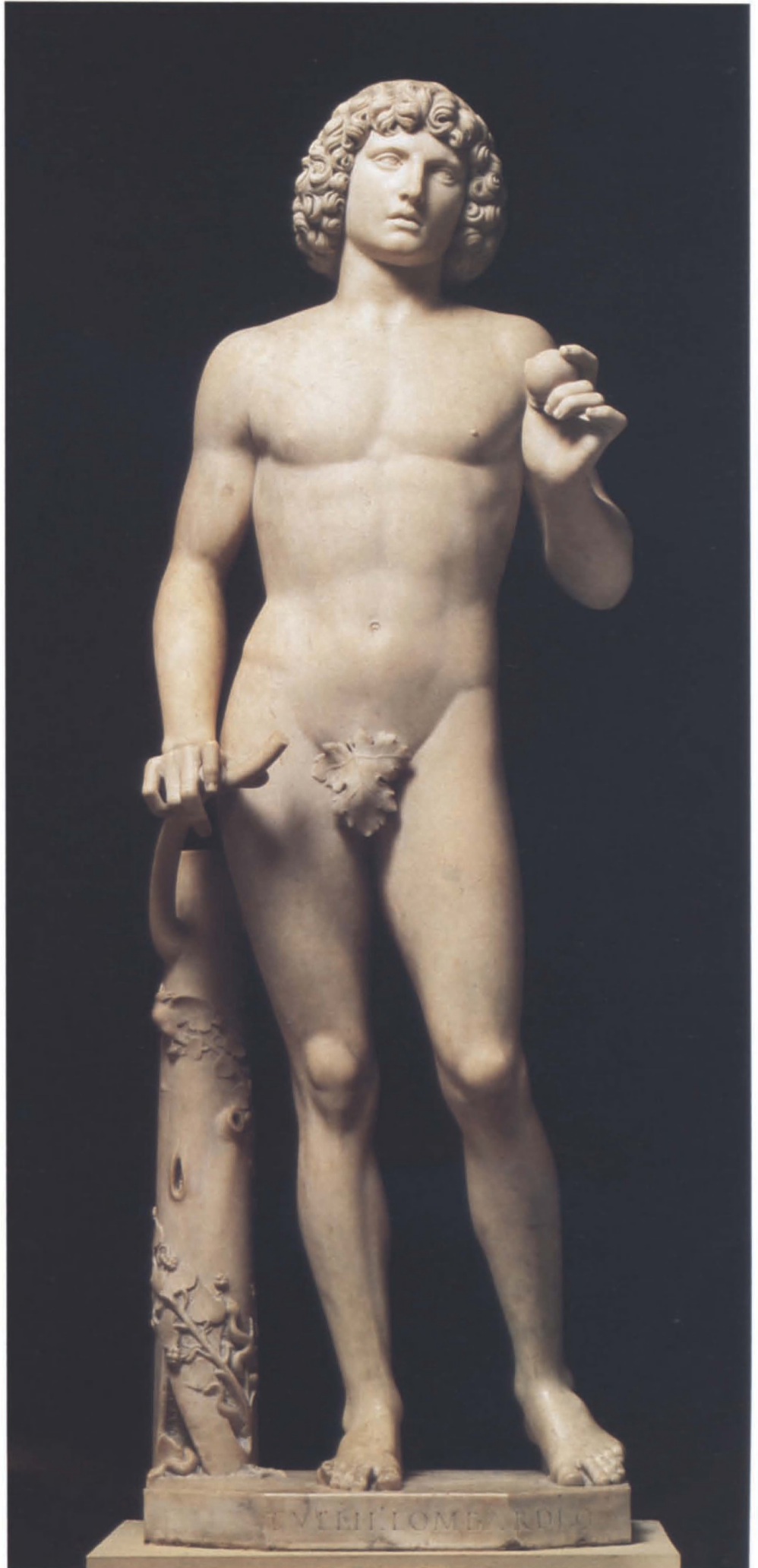
Venetian, ca. 1465–died 1532

ADAM, 1490–95

Marble; H. 75 in. (190.5 cm)

Fletcher Fund, 1936 (36.163)

This figure, on whose base the sculptor has signed his name, belonged to the most important funerary monument of the High Renaissance in Venice, that of Doge Andrea Vendramin (died 1478). Tullio's *Adam* is clearly classicized, like the architectural framework of the tomb, which is derived from the Roman triumphal arch. The figure combines aspects of antique statues of Antinous and Bacchus, interpreted with an almost Attic simplicity. But the decorated tree trunk, the eloquent hands, and the meaningful glance are refinements on the antique. Remarkable for the purity of its marble and the smoothness of its carving, *Adam* was the first monumental classical nude to be carved since antiquity.





Michelangelo Buonarroti

Italian, 1475–1564

STUDIES FOR THE LIBYAN SIBYL,
ca. 1510

Red chalk; 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (28.9 × 21.3 cm)
Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1924
(24.197.2)

Like Raphael and Leonardo, Michelangelo typifies the concept of the Renaissance artist. Sculptor, painter, architect, draftsman, and poet, he redefined the parameters of each field through his own individual genius. Michelangelo made these

studies from a nude male model for the figure of the Libyan Sibyl in the ceiling frescoes of the Sistine Chapel, commissioned in 1508 and unveiled in 1512. Here he studies the contours of the Sibyl's twisting back as she turns to close what will in the fresco become a large book on the ledge behind her. Also on the sheet are sketches of the figure's profiled head, hands, and feet. Although drawn on the flat surface of a page, Michelangelo's figure has been drawn with the force and volume of a piece of sculpture. Through the motion of a body, the artist expresses the human spirit.

Bronzino

Florentine, 1503–1572

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN, ca. 1540

Oil on wood; 37 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(95.6 × 74.9 cm)

H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of
Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.16)

This is one of Bronzino's greatest portraits. The self-possessed aloofness of the sitter and the austere elegance of the palace interior are hallmarks of the courtly style of portraiture he created for Medicean Florence. Although the sitter cannot be identified, he is likely a member of Bronzino's close circle of literary friends. The book held by the sitter in the portrait the fanciful table and chair, with their grotesque decorations, introduce intentionally witty and capricious motifs: visual analogues to the sorts of literary conceits enjoyed by this cultivated society.





Lorenzo Lotto

Italian (Venice), ca. 1480–1556

VENUS AND CUPID

Oil on canvas; 36 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 43 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.

(92.4 × 111.4 cm)

Purchase, Mrs. Charles Wrightsman Gift, 1986 (1986.138)

Of the countless Renaissance paintings of Venus and Cupid, few are as beautiful—and certainly none is quite so startling—as this humorous wedding picture. It is an allegory in which the goddess of love, surrounded by symbols of fertility and conjugal fidelity, blesses a marriage. With her right hand Venus raises a myrtle wreath through which Cupid urinates, with evident delight, onto her lap. His action may seem ludicrous to us

today, but for Lotto's contemporaries a urinating child was an augury of good fortune. It has been suggested that the picture was painted in 1540 for Lotto's cousin, but an earlier date is also possible. Venus may be a portrait of the bride.

(OPPOSITE)

Paolo Veronese

Venetian, 1528–1588

MARS AND VENUS UNITED BY LOVE, ca. 1570

Oil on canvas; 81 × 63 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (205.7 × 161 cm)

John Stewart Kennedy Fund, 1910 (10.189)

This is one of the greatest works by Veronese, whose brilliant use of color and

sensuous female figures influenced European artists from the time of Rubens to that of Delacroix. Together with four other allegorical paintings by Veronese, the picture was owned by Emperor Rudolf II in Prague. Although generally thought to show the goddess of love united by Cupid to the god of war, the picture has also been interpreted as showing Chastity transformed by Love into Charity; the horse restrained by an armed cupid may symbolize restrained passion.





Filippo Negroli

Milanese, recorded 1525–51

PARADE HELMET, 1543

Steel and gold; H. 9½ in. (24.1 cm)

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1720)

This superb example of Italian Renaissance sculpture in steel was made by Filippo Negroli, the leading master of embossed armor in the antique style. The embossed ornament of acanthus scrolls inhabited by putti is inspired by classical prototypes. The reclining mermaid forming the comb of the helmet holds the head of Medusa, whose stare was reputed to turn the onlooker into stone.

Italian, 1508

BOWL

Terracotta; Diam. 12¾ in. (32.4 cm)

Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.1.1015)

Technically and artistically, this large bowl is one of the great masterpieces of Italian majolica. The center is occupied by the coat of arms of Pope Julius II crowned by symbols of papal authority, and it has been suggested that the bowl was a gift from the pope to one of his servitors, Melchiorre di Giorgio Manzoli of Bologna, whose arms appear beneath Julius's. An inscription on the back states that the bowl was made in Castel Durante by the potter Giovanni Maria in 1508, making this the first known signed piece of majolica.

Italian, ca. 1476–80

STUDY FROM THE PALACE AT
GUBBIO

Intarsia of walnut, beech, rosewood, oak, and
fruitwoods on walnut base

Rogers Fund, 1939 (39.153)

This is a detail of a wall from a small room that is one of the Museum's most celebrated environments: the *studiolo* intended for meditation or study in the Gubbio palace of Duke Federico da Montefeltro. The *studiolo* walls were decorated with small pieces of wood of various sorts inlaid in patterns, a technique known as intarsia. Here the designs produce trompe-l'oeil effects, as cabinet doors appear ajar and books lie open, evidence of the great interest in linear perspective at this time.







Northern Europe



EVEN AFTER THE PERIOD of Gothic glory, a golden age of art flourished during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the North, in many ways as splendid and revolutionary as the Renaissance in Italy. A true renaissance has usually been denied the Gothic North if only because the revival of the antique was not initially part of this area's development. For the Italians great art was mural painting—works to be viewed from a distance as a grand design enhancing a huge surface. Northern painting, on the other hand, was

intimate and personal and had its aesthetic basis in the delicate and diminutive Book of Hours, to be scanned slowly for its intricate details, its gemlike fineness, its refined preciousness. Despite these fundamental differences it is remarkable how developments in Netherlandish art paralleled those in Italy. Indeed it is possible to discern phases in Northern painting similar to those of the Italian Renaissance.

Early in the fifteenth century, the Limbourg brothers, painters to Jean, duke of Berry, executed some of the most memorable images of the so-called International Style. In their miniatures the first signs of borrowings from Italian antiquity can be faintly detected, as in the *rinseau* borders of the *Belles Heures* of about 1410 (see page 72). Their tastes were transmitted to later Flemish painters who worked for the courts, such as Jan van Eyck, but the progressive tendency toward naturalism was exploited more by those artists who worked in the city guilds, including Robert Campin and his apprentice Rogier van der Weyden. They painted for the merchant class that was molding the economic and political life of the Low Countries into the bourgeois society that ultimately triumphed there. Later generations of Netherlandish artists were indebted both to van Eyck and Rogier. Their styles—meticulous realism, on the one hand, and rhythmic abstraction, on the other—form the poles between which subsequent styles vacillate.

Deep space and immobile figures characterized the style of many painters from the northern Netherlands, regional differences perhaps due to their isolation from the flamboyant courtly tastes of the Flemish patrons. The Netherlandish artists were especially renowned for their portraits, which were more meticulously descriptive and psychologically revealing than those in the Italian manner.

The violent social upheaval and political turmoil that followed the demise of Burgundian rule in the Netherlands, the tensions within the Church on the eve of the Reformation, and the pervasive fear of an impending apocalypse provoked a frantic spirit in the late 1400s. The collapse of medieval values can be clearly noted in the arts, but the positive features of a new culture, while more difficult to describe, were there as well. The guilds proliferated as a new class of patron—the merchant—emerged to replace the Church and its benefactors. Artists and craftsmen flocked to Antwerp from all over northern Europe to reap the profits of the new market; they introduced the eclecticism so characteristic of Antwerp's art. During these years a new art form—the print—was established. It was especially lucrative because of its attraction for middle-class patrons.

The Protestant revolution had much to do with the fate of the arts in Germany, and to a lesser extent, in the Netherlands as well. It became heretical to produce images of God and this stifled the arts in Germany, at least as far as religious imagery was concerned. But the Reformation did not occur overnight, and iconoclasm was not

(OPPOSITE)

Jan van Eyck

Netherlandish, active by 1422, died 1441

THE CRUCIFIXION and THE LAST JUDGMENT, 1425–30

Oil on canvas transferred from wood; each panel: 22¼ × 7¾ in. (56.5 × 19.7 cm)

Fletcher Fund, 1933 (33.92ab)

Jan van Eyck, one of the greatest artists of the Renaissance, appears to have been the first painter to develop the full potential of the new oil medium. These two small pictures, either the wings of a triptych or of a diptych, are a tour de force of van Eyck's representational skills and conjure up a veritable microcosm. Every detail is observed with equal interest—from the alpine landscape to the slender body of Christ and the emotions of the various figures. The pictures date from the same time as the Ghent Altarpiece (1431). The raised lettering on the original frames forms quotations from Isaiah on the Crucifixion and from Revelations and Deuteronomy on the Last Judgment.

(LEFT)

Detail from chasuble on page 130

universally accepted by all who joined the movement. Albrecht Dürer of Nuremberg is often regarded as the founder of the Northern Renaissance, and he, in fact, did bring the Italian revival of the antique to the North in both spirit and form. The painter of Renaissance portraits par excellence was Hans Holbein the Younger, a cosmopolitan artist who lived and worked in three international cities: Augsburg, Basel, and London.

Regional ducal powers, which had provided the patronage during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, gave way to international empires in the sixteenth. Through marriage the Hapsburgs had inherited the Netherlands in 1477; Henry VIII had proclaimed England free of Rome's influence, and in France Francis I was determined to establish a Renaissance court in his new capital at Fontainebleau. For Francis, who knew Italy well, there was only one source that could nourish his culture and that was Renaissance Italy. Nevertheless, the severe tenets of Gothic art still lingered in France. The court of Fontainebleau served in a sense to filter Italian art into the North.

A new Renaissance philosophy appears in the works of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, who stands out like a giant among later Netherlandish artists. He was the master of the latest styles, and it is impossible to characterize his art as medieval, Renaissance, or even Mannerist, since his works seem to encompass all these expressions. Unlike his compatriots, Bruegel did not dwell on antiquities and Renaissance masterpieces but concentrated on the landscape, especially that of the towering Alps. It seems strange indeed that in our discussion of the Renaissance in the North, what ultimately triumphs is not the image of man but the cosmic forces of nature.



(OPPOSITE)

Gerard David

Netherlandish, active by 1484, died 1523

VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH FOUR ANGELS, ca. 1505

Oil on wood; 24 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (63.2 × 39.1 cm)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 1977 (1977.1.1)

The influence of Italian Renaissance art can be seen more clearly in the works of Gerard David than in those of Hans Memling, though both artists worked in Bruges for Italian patrons. Painted about 1505, this exceptionally well-preserved panel was probably commissioned by someone associated with the Carthusian monastery of Genadendal, outside the walls of Bruges and seen here in the background. The composition is based on Jan van Eyck's *Virgin and Child at the Fountain* of 1439 (Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp). Gerard David added a different setting with musical angels and turned the Child's head toward the viewer.

Master F.V.B.

Flemish

SAINT BARBARA, 1475–1500

Engraving; 6 $\frac{1}{16}$ × 3 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (16.6 × 9.2 cm)

The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1955 (55.530)

This engraving of Saint Barbara, who was beheaded by her father for refusing to renounce Christianity, was made by an engraver known only by the initials F.V.B. (the "V.B." may stand for "van Brugge," "of Bruges"). He was one of the finest early Netherlandish engravers, and his oeuvre of about 60 prints reflects the style of such Flemish masters as Rogier van der Weyden, Dieric Bouts, and Hans Memling. In this fine example of his work, Saint Barbara, patroness of armorers and firearms, stands holding a peacock feather, a symbol of immortality, in front of the tower in which her father imprisoned her.





Petrus Christus

Netherlandish, active by 1444, died 1475/76

PORTRAIT OF A CARTHUSIAN, 1446

Oil on wood; overall: 11½ × 8½ in.

(29.2 × 21.6 cm)

The Jules Bache Collection, 1949 (49.7.19)

In 1444, three years after the death of Jan van Eyck, Petrus Christus left his homeland in the northern Netherlands to settle in Bruges. This portrait, one of Christus's earliest signed and dated works, shows van Eyck's influence in the technical virtuosity of the trompe-l'oeil fly and the carved inscription. The sitter, once transformed into a saint by the addition of a halo, is an unknown lay brother of the Carthusian order. The fly is a symbol of decay, a reminder of man's mortality, but it also greatly enhances the fiction of a real person gazing at us from behind a stone ledge in which Christus's signature appears as an incised inscription.

Rogier van der Weyden

Netherlandish, 1399/1400–1464

FRANCESCO D'ESTE, ca. 1460

Oil on wood; overall: 12½ × 8¾ in.

(31.8 × 22.2 cm)

The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931 (32.100.43)

The work of Rogier van der Weyden, at one time an apprentice to Robert Campin, painter of the Annunciation Altarpiece (page 74), has an elegance and grace that epitomizes the finest qualities of the late Gothic style. Rogier learned much from Campin and Van Eyck, but he fashioned a world that more fittingly responded to the tastes of the upper classes. The sitter in this fine portrait is Francesco d'Este, the illegitimate son of Leonello, the duke of Ferrara, who received his military training in Brussels in 1444 and spent the rest of his life in Burgundy. The ring and hammer he holds may be emblems of office or tournament prizes. This panel was probably painted about 1460, when Francesco was close to 30. With his elongated features and introspective gaze, Francesco is the paragon of aristocratic aloofness. The Este coat-of-arms with Leonello's crest, the hooded lynx, is on the back of the panel.





Dieric Bouts

Netherlandish, active by 1457, died 1475

VIRGIN AND CHILD

Oil on wood; $8\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ in. (21.6 × 16.5 cm)
Theodore M. Davis Collection, Bequest of
Theodore M. Davis, 1915 (30.95.280)

Born and trained in Haarlem, Dieric Bouts spent most of his life in Louvain working for Flemish aristocrats. The composition of this exquisite painting derives from that of the Cambrai *Madonna*, a 14th-century Italian copy of a Byzantine icon then thought to be a miraculous image painted by Saint Luke. Because of the heightened realism of Bouts's technique, the figures have a compelling lifelike quality. Several replicas of this painting, one by Bouts himself, attest to the popularity of the image.



Hans Memling

Netherlandish, active ca. 1465, died 1494

TOMMASO PORTINARI AND HIS WIFE, ca. 1470

Oil on wood; left: 17 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (44.1 × 33.7 cm); right: 17 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (44.1 × 34 cm)

Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913 (14.40.626,627)

Memling was one of the great portrait painters of the northern Renaissance, and a large number of portraits by him survive. Although born in Germany, he is considered a Flemish painter because he spent most of his life in Bruges, where he

was influenced by Van Eyck in his quest for an exact likeness and fine detail. Memling's work was particularly popular with members of the large Italian community in Bruges. Tommaso Portinari, a Florentine who represented the Medici bank in Bruges, married Maria Baroncelli in 1470, when he was 38 and she was 14. It was soon after their marriage that Portinari commissioned this exquisite pair of portraits of himself and his wife, which must have originally been the wings of a triptych. Portinari, who loved Flemish art, also commissioned Hugo van der Goes to paint the famous Portinari Altarpiece (now in the Uffizi, Florence).



Albrecht Dürer

German, 1471–1528

ADAM AND EVE, 1504

Engraving (fourth state of five); $9\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{7}{8}$ in.
(24.8 × 19.4 cm)

Bequest of Ida Kammerer, in memory of her husband, Frederic Kammerer, M.D., 1933
(33.79.9)

Throughout Dürer's life, he was preoccupied with the study of ideal human proportion. He struggled to portray the perfect male and female forms, and *Adam and Eve* is a prime example of this interest. The figure of Adam is based on the *Apollo Belvedere* and Eve on an antique *Venus*, and indeed they stand frontally like statues, thus

somewhat blunting the significance of this dramatic moment in human history. The trees themselves and the animals in the woodland setting carry rich symbolism, alluding to the Tree of Life and the Four Temperaments. The latter, according to medieval belief, were in perfect equilibrium before the Fall, but thereafter man was susceptible to vices as one or another of the temperaments gained dominance. The technical brilliance of this engraving added luster to Dürer's already widespread reputation. He modeled the flesh of the subjects in precise detail, using fine dots to create such a variety of textures that the shading virtually creates the illusion of color.

Albrecht Dürer

German, 1471–1528

VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH SAINT ANNE, 1519

Oil on canvas; $23\frac{5}{8} \times 19\frac{5}{8}$ in. (60 × 49.8 cm)
Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913 (14.40.633)

Saint Anne, the mother of the Virgin, was particularly revered in Germany and was frequently depicted in Holy Family groupings. This painting was probably made in 1519 (the monogram and date are later additions), the year in which Dürer became an ardent follower of Martin Luther, and the emotional intensity of the image may be a reflection of his conversion. It owes much to the artist's two visits to Venice, when he came under the influence of Italian art, particularly the work of Giovanni Bellini. The monumental masses of the figures and the balanced composition reveal the impact that Italian art made on Dürer's northern Gothic style. The lifelike baby is very different from the wizened creatures often found in Northern European paintings.







Brussels, ca. 1520–25

SPRING, FROM THE TWELVE AGES OF MAN

Wool and silk; 14 ft. 7 in. × 23 ft. 8 in.

(4.45 × 7.28 m)

Gift of The Hearst Foundation, in memory of William Randolph Hearst, 1953 (53.221.1)

Tapestries, often called the murals of the north, were made to provide splendor at a distance and delightful details close at hand. This Flemish example, the first in a set of four depicting the months and the ages of man, all in the Metropolitan Museum, includes the first three months of the year and the first 18 years of life, presided over by Venus in the center. The first age, or

January, on the left, has at the top, in a roundel, Janus feasting and a man running in a rainstorm; the scene below is the test of Moses, who as an infant chose hot coals rather than jewels, illustrating the lack of common sense in children under seven. At the top center, with a roundel representing February, a man sitting by a fire, is the story of the astute Roman youngster, Papirius, who kept the secrets of the Senate from his mother, exemplifying the growth of intelligence in teenagers. March, at the upper right, with men at work in a vineyard, shows below the youthful Alexander amazing some Persian envoys with his shrewd questions, demonstrating a man's maturity at 18.





Pieter Bruegel the Elder

Netherlandish, active by 1551, died 1569

THE HARVESTERS, 1565

Oil on wood; 46½ × 63¼ in.

(118.1 × 160.7 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1919 (19.164)

Although Bruegel traveled to Italy in 1552–53, he was apparently unimpressed by the vogue for heroic, ideal nudes and classical art that had made Rome the center of the art world. Instead of classical subjects, he chose to depict peasant life, as in this

picture of a wheat harvest, one of the five remaining panels from a cycle devoted to the labors of the months. What this picture shares with the art of Renaissance Italy is a wonderfully synthetic vision of the world and a breathtaking command of space. The simplified forms of the harvesters convincingly convey their weight and solidity, while their familiar activities—cutting bread, eating, drinking—endow them with an everyday reality. The contorted expressions on some of the faces, as well as the pose of the exhausted man

lying against the tree, suggest the hardships they endured. The figures occupy a relatively small portion of the panel in comparison with the brilliantly lit, vast landscape, reminding us that man remains subordinate to nature.





North Netherlandish, 1570

CHASUBLE

Linen, wool, and silk; 44 × 27½ in.

(111.8 × 69.9 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1954 (54.176.2)

Ecclesiastical vestments made of rich velvets and elaborate embroideries were often costly gifts to the church. In this highly unusual chasuble, which was probably used in a private chapel, the lavish effects of a pomegranate pattern in velvet and an embroidered scene of the Israelites gathering manna are imitated in tapestry. The device of reeds bent but not broken by the waves, particularly significant in politically turbulent times, is that of Johannes de Visscher van der Gheer of Culemborg; the arms are those of the same family and of the illegitimate Van Culemborch branch.

(OPPOSITE)

Lucas Cranach the Elder

German, 1472–1553

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS, ca. 1528

Oil on wood; 40⅞ × 28 in. (101.9 × 71.1 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1928 (28.221)

Cranach was one of the most versatile artists of the Northern Renaissance, a staunch patron of the Reformation, and a close friend of Martin Luther. He painted didactic religious paintings, but he also produced his own erotic ideal of the female nude. Although his style, unlike that of Dürer, borrowed little from the Italians, he favored mythological and classical subjects and painted the story of the Judgment of Paris many times during the course of his career. Here the artist has chosen a German version of the story, in which Mercury presents the three goddesses—Juno, Venus, and Minerva—to Paris in a dream. Cranach signals Venus's victory by placing Cupid, her son, in the upper left, aiming in her direction as she points to him. The figures of the three women give the artist an opportunity to make a visual tour of the female nude from different perspectives.



Hans Ruckers the Elder

Netherlandish, ca. 1545–1598

DOUBLE VIRGINAL, 1581

Wood and various other materials; W. 74¼ in.
(190 cm)

Gift of B. H. Homan, 1929 (29.90)

This sumptuously painted virginal, the oldest extant work by Hans Ruckers the Elder, head of a renowned family of Flemish harpsichord builders, was made in Antwerp in 1581, when Spain dominated

Flanders. Above the right keyboard are medallions of Philip II and his fourth wife, Anne of Austria. On the underside of the lid is a painted scene of a garden fete; the panel below the keyboards bears a Latin motto meaning “Music, sweet solace of labor.” The double virginal, which anticipates the double-manual harpsichord, consists of two instruments. When the higher-pitched “child” at the left is withdrawn from its compartment and placed above the “mother,” both can be played by one person.

(OPPOSITE)

Caspar Behaim

Austrian, active 1568–84

ASTRONOMICAL TABLE CLOCK, 1568

Bronze gilt, brass gilt, and steel; H. 14¼ in.
(36.2 cm)

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.634)

Most 16th-century clocks were enclosed in metal cases, some architectural in nature, others engraved and embossed with designs that rival the work of goldsmiths of the day. The case of this clock is made of gilt bronze with a domed top decorated in relief with a scene of men hunting bear. The dials on the front of the clock mark the hours of the day, the day of the month (with saints’ days), and the position of the sun in the zodiac. A large astrolabe dial fills most of the back of the clock. The base is decorated with the triumphal procession of Pluto and Proserpina.







French, ca. 1555

PARADE ARMOR OF HENRY II OF FRANCE

Steel, embossed, blued, silvered, and gilt, leather, and velvet; H. 5 ft. 9 in. (175.4 cm)
Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1939 (39.121)

This sumptuous parade armor was made for Henry II (r. 1547–59) and was meant to be worn on state occasions amid much pomp and pageantry. Requirements of defense are completely subordinated here to purposes of display. The surfaces are embossed with dense foliate scrolls inhabited by human figures, symbols of Triumph and Fame, and a variety of fabulous creatures that derive from the Italian grotesque. The ornament is attributed to the Parisian goldsmith and printmaker Étienne Delaune (1518/19–1583), one of the most original designers at the French court.



Hans Holbein the Younger

German, 1497/98–1543

PORTRAIT OF A MEMBER OF THE
WEDIGH FAMILY, 1532

Oil on wood; 16 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (42.2 × 32.4 cm)

Bequest of Edward S. Harkness, 1940

(50.135.4)

Hans Holbein was a true Renaissance man. Equally at home in Basel and London, he was a friend of the great humanists of his day and produced works ranging from paintings to book illustration to designs for stained glass. This picture demonstrates why Holbein is regarded as one of the world's greatest portraitists. The clarity of color, the precision of drawing, and the crisp, explicit characterization constitute a compelling likeness of an individual person. The sitter is a member of a Cologne trading family; presumably he was their representative in England, where Holbein found many clients among a wealthy community of German merchants who belonged to the Hanseatic League.

Jean Clouet

French, active by 1516, died 1541

GUILLAUME BUDÉ, ca. 1536

Oil on wood; 15 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (39.7 × 34.3 cm)

Maria DeWitt Jesup Fund, 1946 (46.68)

Jean Clouet, who was probably from the Netherlands, worked at the French court from 1516 and rose to the position of chief painter to King Francis I. His portraits were highly praised by his contemporaries and were notable for both their delicacy and their force of characterization. Guillaume Budé (1467–1540), a famous humanist, was the founder of the Collège de France, the first keeper of the royal library (now the Bibliothèque Nationale), an ambassador, and chief city magistrate of Paris. This portrait is mentioned in Budé's manuscript notes and is Jean Clouet's only documented painting.



THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY IN EUROPE







THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY IN Europe rings with the names of the great sovereigns at whose courts power and wealth were concentrated and the arts flourished. Elizabeth I of England secured for her heirs the Protestant succession and for her country mastery of the seas; Louis XIV of France assembled his defeated vassals at Versailles; Gustavus II Adolphus and Christina of Sweden were for a time the most powerful Protestant monarchs on the Continent; Philip III and Philip IV of Spain ruled a vast empire in the New World and intrigued to maintain Hapsburg power in the Old; and Peter the Great of Russia consolidated the power of the house of Romanov and used it to push his country into the mainstream of European political, intellectual, and artistic life.

Just as the kings and queens of this period are still exemplars of glorious majesty and shrewd statesmanship, so the artists of the century remain the Old Masters of European art. In every medium the clash and complicity of the traditional Classical style and the newer Baroque vision bequeathed us a rich treasure.

As is so often the case, the art-historical designation for this period, the Age of the Baroque, is a misnomer. The Baroque was but one of the stimulating, if at times perplexing, multiplicity of styles that vied for preeminence during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The term "Baroque" was itself coined only at a later date by unsympathetic critics who wished to condemn an artistic (and literary) style that they judged eccentric and irreconcilable with the precepts of Classicism, the principal rival to Baroque style during the seventeenth century.

Baroque style occurred in as many brands as there were schools of painting in different countries and cities. By its intrinsic nature Classical style tended to be more codified. Although definitions are elusive in seventeenth-century art, it is reasonable to conclude that Baroque artists were captivated by the ceaseless flux of nature and human existence, while classicizing artists sought to express the timeless quintessences of beauty and harmony.

From about 1595 to 1760 Rome was the crossroads of Europe, an academy-without-walls to which artists from every nation came in order to improve and test themselves against the time-honored standards of ancient art as well as the best art of their contemporaries. To an unprecedented degree, wealthy and prominent people in Rome felt that patronage of the fine arts was a prerogative and almost, in fact, an obligation. The Church was the other source of patronage, as new orders and congregations, having been organized in the course of the Counter-Reformation, required suitable places of worship.

At the close of the sixteenth century both Caravaggio and Annibale Carracci undertook to reform Italian painting, and their styles had profound consequences for painting throughout Europe. Annibale proposed to re-create the High Renaissance, and to some extent he succeeded in this. Caravaggio claimed to despise the past and to rely only on nature and his eyes. He was ultimately responsible for the current of naturalism that lies at the heart of the Baroque style and that surfaces in the works of such different artists as Rubens, Ribera, Velázquez, and Rembrandt.

The seventeenth century was the Golden Age of Spanish art. An abundance of first-rank masters developed a Baroque style that accommodated both ardent mysticism and hard realism. The travels of the Flemish master Peter Paul Rubens and the service of his foremost pupil, Anthony van Dyck, in Spain and England are but two instances of the unprecedented internationalism of European art in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Nicolas Poussin and Claude Lorrain, the foremost French painters, resisted entreaties to return home from Italy, and thus a considerable part of seventeenth-

(OVERLEAF)

Johannes Vermeer

Dutch, 1632–1675

YOUNG WOMAN WITH A WATER JUG, early 1660s

Oil on canvas; 18 × 16 in. (45.7 × 40.6 cm)
Marquand Collection, Gift of Henry G. Marquand, 1889 (89.15.21)

Vermeer's exquisitely balanced compositions and color schemes were ideally suited to his usual theme of domestic tranquility. At least 21 of the approximately 35 known works by Vermeer were purchased as they were painted by a single wealthy patron in Delft, Pieter van Ruijven, whose support partly explains how the artist could have devoted such technical refinement and subtle expression to his art. This canvas was the first of 13 paintings by Vermeer to arrive in America between 1887 and 1919.

(OPPOSITE)

Diego Velázquez

Spanish, 1599–1660

JUAN DE PAREJA, 1648

Oil on canvas; 32 × 27½ in. (81.3 × 69.9 cm)
Purchase, Fletcher Fund, Rogers Fund, and Bequest of Miss Adelaide Milton de Groot (1876–1967), by exchange, supplemented by gifts from friends of the Museum, 1971 (1971.86)

Exceptional powers of observation and an unprecedentedly vibrant technique make Velázquez the greatest Spanish painter of his century. As court painter to King Philip IV of Spain, Velázquez was sent in 1648 to Rome, then the center of the international art world, where he made two portraits of strikingly different characters: a state portrait of Pope Innocent X (Doria Pamphili Gallery, Rome) and a less formal one of his studio assistant Juan de Pareja, a Sevillian of Moorish descent. When the picture was exhibited publicly at the Pantheon in 1650, one connoisseur remarked that while all the rest was art, this alone was truth.

(LEFT)

Detail from Savonnerie Carpet (see page 159)



century French painting took place outside of France. In political terms Protestant Holland was odd man out in this century of absolutist monarchy. Dutch art from about 1600 to 1665 was characterized by a formation of Baroque style that had no counterpart in Europe. The differences were based in the circumstance that the United Netherlands was the only country in which patronage stemmed predominantly from the Protestant middle class. The greatest Dutch painter of the century was Rembrandt, in whose paintings and prints the Metropolitan Museum is especially rich. Vermeer was certainly the brightest light of the third quarter of the century; fewer than forty of his paintings are known and five of these are in the Metropolitan.

As befitted an age where splendor bespoke power, kings, courtiers, and burghers all insisted on furnishings appropriate to their station. Workers in stucco, wood, and marble crafted rooms of splendid proportions and exquisite detail. Goldsmiths and porcelain designers produced objects that epitomize luxury. And in France, where the Sun King demanded unparalleled splendor, the weavers at Beauvais, the porcelain factories at Sèvres, and the royal cabinetmakers at Versailles developed the *grand goût*—a style forever associated with France in its “splendid century.”

Nicolas Poussin

French, 1594–1665

THE RAPE OF THE SABINE WOMEN

Oil on canvas; 60 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 82 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.

(154.6 × 209.9 cm)

Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1946 (46.160)

Although Poussin spent almost the whole of his working life in Rome, he was the greatest as well as the most influential painter of 17th-century France. His authoritative interpretations of ancient history and Greek and Roman mythology left their mark on European art down to the time of David and Ingres. Here he shows Romulus, ruler of the newly founded city of Rome, giving a prearranged signal with his cloak for the Roman soldiers to carry off the Sabine women to become their wives, thereby establishing themselves permanently in their new home. The Sabine men, who had come unarmed to what they thought would be a religious celebration, are put to flight. The subject enabled Poussin to display to the full his unsurpassed archaeological knowledge and his mastery of dramatic interpretation.

Gian Lorenzo Bernini

Italian (Rome), 1598–1680

BACCHANAL: A FAUN TEASED BY CHILDREN, 1616–17

Marble; H. 52 in. (132.1 cm)

Purchase, The Annenberg Fund, Inc. Gift, Fletcher, Rogers and Louis V. Bell Funds, and Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, by exchange, 1976 (1976.92)

Gian Lorenzo Bernini was the heroic central figure of Italian Baroque sculpture. A prodigy of astonishing facility, he was trained in the workshop of his father, Pietro, an important pre-Baroque sculptor. During his apprenticeship, he executed a number of marble sculptures, which were recorded in his father's name. This, the most ambitious of those works, provides insights into the crucial shift in style that took place during the early 17th century. The subject is a somewhat mysterious one, having its origins in the Bacchic revels of classical and Renaissance iconography. In his portrayal of the faun, Bernini revealed what would become a lifelong interest in the rendering of emotional and spiritual exaltation.





Peter Paul Rubens

Flemish, 1577–1640

A FOREST AT DAWN WITH A DEER HUNT, ca. 1635

Oil on wood; 24½ × 35½ in.
(62.2 × 90.2 cm)

Purchase, The Annenberg Foundation, Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, Michel David-Weill, The Dillon Fund, Henry J. and Drue Heinz Foundation, Lola Kramarsky, Annette de la Renta, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, The Vincent Astor Foundation and Peter J. Sharp Gifts; Bequests of Emma A. Sheaffer and Theodore M. Davis, by exchange; Gift of George R. Hann, in memory of his mother, Annie Sykes Hann, by exchange; Gifts of George A. Hearn, George Blumenthal, George H. and Helen M. Richard and Mrs. George A. Stern and Bequests of Helen Hay

Whitney and John Henry Abegg and Anonymous Bequest, by exchange, supplemented by gifts and funds from friends of the Museum, 1990 (1990.196)

This recently acquired painting, once owned by Sir Joshua Reynolds, is the first finished landscape painting by Rubens to enter a collection in the western hemisphere. Rubens's late landscapes were often painted for his own pleasure and reflect his interest in nature, Titian, and Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Here Rubens treats the subject as an encounter of elemental forces—of light and darkness, life and death, growth and decay—and gives this essentially realistic scene a sense of myth and metaphor.

Peter Paul Rubens

Flemish, 1577–1640

RUBENS, HIS WIFE HELENA FOURMENT, AND THEIR SON PETER PAUL, ca. 1639

Oil on wood; 80¼ × 62¼ in.
(203.8 × 158.1 cm)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, in honor of Sir John Pope-Hennessy, 1981 (1981.238)

Rubens married his second wife, the exceptionally beautiful 16-year-old Helena Fourment, in 1630, when he was 53. This painting celebrates their marriage, and the luminosity of the colors and the ebullient presentation of the figures make this one of Rubens's most magnificent achievements. He has related his marriage to the theme of the Garden of Love; the fountain, the trellis, and the caryatid are symbols of fertility. The warm, intimate expression of the painter and the gentle caress of his hand attest to his love for Helena.





El Greco

Greek (born Crete), 1541–1614

PORTRAIT OF A CARDINAL

Oil on canvas; 67¼ × 42½ in.

(180.8 × 108 cm)

H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs.

H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.5)

El Greco was born Domenikos Theotokopoulos in Crete. Following his training in Venice, possibly in the workshop of Titian, he settled in Toledo, Spain. This is one of El Greco's two greatest portraits. The sitter is usually identified as Cardinal Don Fernando Niño de Guevera, Grand Inquisitor and, from 1601, Archbishop of Seville. El Greco suggests the cardinal's personality through the emphasis on his prominent glasses, the compulsive gesture of his left hand, the animated, nervous brushwork, and the singular color range.

El Greco

Greek (born Crete), 1541–1614

VIEW OF TOLEDO, ca. 1597

Oil on canvas; 47¾ × 42¾ in.

(121.3 × 108.6 cm)

H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs.

H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.6)

This painting is El Greco's highly personal depiction of the city of Toledo, the center of artistic, intellectual, and religious life in 16th-century Spain. A city of great antiquity, Toledo is the see of the primate archbishop of Spain and until 1561 was the capital of the Spanish empire. In portraying his adopted home, El Greco has taken considerable liberty with the topography of the city, so that the pastoral foreground, with the Tagus River and Alcantara bridge, serve as a foil for the haunting vision of the Alcazar and cathedral tower against an eerily stormy sky.





Georges de La Tour

French, 1593–1652

THE PENITENT MAGDALEN, 1638–43

Oil on canvas; 52½ × 40¼ in.

(133.4 × 102.2 cm)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman,
1978 (1978.517)

An artist of great brilliance and originality, Georges de La Tour was from the duchy of Lorraine in northeastern France. Early in his career he gained knowledge of

contemporary Caravaggesque painting, with its emphasis on realism and dramatic effects of light and dark. This picture shows Mary Magdalen in a dark room at the dramatic moment of her conversion, her features lit by a candle flame that imparts a hauntingly spiritual quality to the work. The elaborate silver mirror, the pearls on the table, and the jewels on the floor symbolize luxury, which she has cast aside. In their place she clasps a skull, a common symbol of mortality.

Jacob van Ruisdael

Dutch, 1628/29–1682

WHEAT FIELDS, 1670s

Oil on canvas; 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 51 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

(100 × 130.2 cm)

Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913 (14.40.623)

Better than any other Dutch painter, Ruisdael described in his landscapes—with their low horizons and wide vistas of sand and dunes—the look and feel of his country. With extraordinary sensitivity to the ever-shifting nuances of atmosphere and light, he

sought to express as well the majestic and incontestably supreme power of nature. In his paintings of the 1670s, like this one, flat landscape subjects are characteristic, as are the converging lines of earth and sky and the alteration of shadow and sunlight. The tiny figures who populate Ruisdael's canvases—indeed, all human activities—are ultimately dwarfed by the vast canopy of sky and immense, towering clouds. This vision of nature is impressive and powerful yet never loses its wistful, melancholic beauty.





Rembrandt van Rijn

Dutch, 1606–1669

ARISTOTLE WITH A BUST OF HOMER, 1653

Oil on canvas; 56½ × 53¾ in.

(143.5 × 136.5 cm)

Purchase, special funds and gifts of friends of the Museum, 1961 (61.198)

This imaginary portrait, one of Rembrandt's best-known works, was painted for Don Antonio Ruffo, a wealthy Sicilian nobleman and Rembrandt's only foreign patron, who had asked Rembrandt for a portrait of a philosopher. Rather than choose a single figure, the enormously inventive artist found a way to present three of the great men of antiquity: Aristotle, Homer, and Alexander the Great. Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher of the fourth century B.C., is shown in his library dressed in the robes of a Renaissance humanist. He rests his hand on a bust of Homer and wears a splendid chain bearing a medallion of Alexander the Great, who had at one time been Aristotle's pupil. The figure of Homer was certainly based on one of several Hellenistic busts owned by Rembrandt; the figure of Aristotle is reminiscent of Rembrandt's portraits of the Jews of the Amsterdam ghetto, whom he had often used as models in his biblical paintings. The solemn stillness of Aristotle's study, the eloquence of his fingers resting on the bust of the blind poet, and above all the brooding mystery in his face unite to communicate an image of deep thought.



Rembrandt van Rijn

Dutch, 1606–1669

THE THREE CROSSES (second state),
1653

Drypoint and burin printed on vellum;

15 × 17¼ in. (38.1 × 43.8 cm)

Gift of Felix M. Warburg and his family, 1941
(41.1.31)

Rembrandt's romance with drypoint in the 1650s and 1660s is one of the important milestones in the history of printmaking. His inventiveness in this medium led to the

creation of compositions that offered more complex visual information and variety of drama than previously had been imagined, and whereas earlier intaglio prints had been translucent and in general rather bodiless, Rembrandt's had a structure and richness of surface that approximate many of his great oil paintings. Moreover, they are illumined by an expressive power that never fails to pierce to the heart of things, whether the subject be, as it is here, a momentous scene from Scripture or the simplest study of still life.





Rembrandt van Rijn

Dutch, 1606–1669

SELF-PORTRAIT, 1660

Oil on canvas; 31 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(80.3 × 67.3 cm)

Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913 (14.40.618)

Rembrandt recorded his own likeness in at least 75 paintings, drawings, and prints,

which date from his earliest years in Leyden to the last year of his life in Amsterdam. The dozens of painted examples clearly had many purposes, ranging from theatrical displays of emotional expression in the youthful works, to the most candid self-scrutiny in some of the late canvases. A few self-portraits were intended for great patrons, others no doubt for family

members, and some must have been painted with no other viewer in mind, like pages in a diary. In this painting, a sober assessment of his appearance at the age of fifty-four, Rembrandt records light and textures with the objectivity of a still-life painter, an approach that makes the expression of his eyes and mouth all the more compelling.



Anthony van Dyck

Flemish, 1599–1641

JAMES STUART, DUKE OF RICHMOND AND LENNOX

Oil on canvas; 85 × 50¼ in.

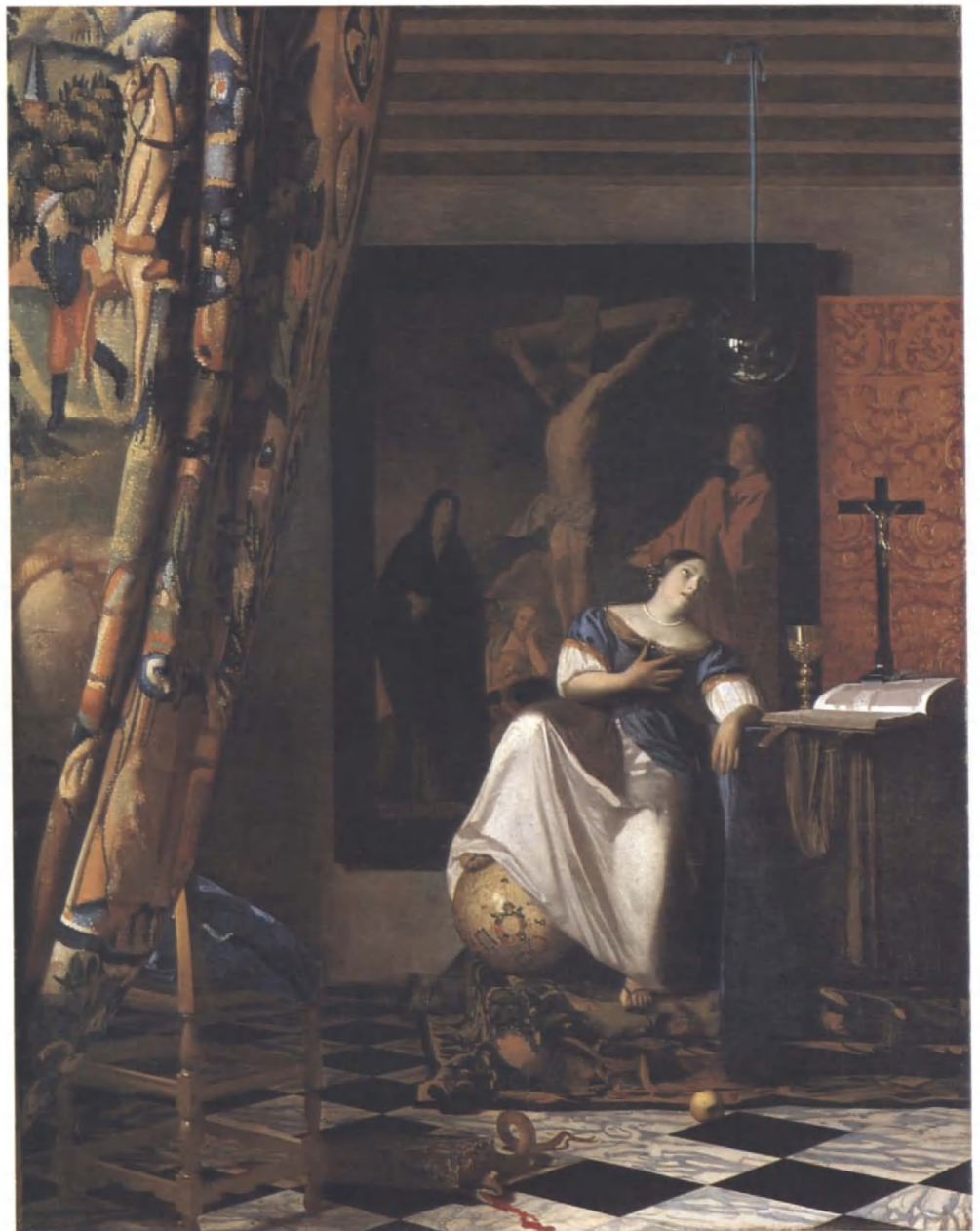
(215.9 × 127.6 cm)

Marquand Collection, Gift of Henry G.

Marquand, 1889 (89.15.16)

In 1632 Van Dyck entered the service of King Charles I of England; he was knighted the same year. Van Dyck's portraits of Charles I flatter a royal sitter who was actually not very imposing. Possibly the same was true of James Stewart (1612–1655), Charles's cousin and protégé, depicted here.

Certainly Van Dyck has used all his skills to give the duke elegance and a commanding presence. The ratio of his head to his body is one to seven, instead of one to six, the average in life. The dog stretching its great body against its master also emphasizes the duke's height and aristocratic bearing. The composition is based loosely on those used by Titian, whose works Van Dyck had studied during his long sojourn in Italy.



Johannes Vermeer

Dutch, 1632–1675

ALLEGORY OF THE FAITH

Oil on canvas; 45 × 35 in. (114.3 × 88.9 cm)

The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael

Friedsam, 1931 (32.100.18)

An unusually large canvas for Vermeer, this is one of the two known paintings of his that have explicitly allegorical content. Vermeer had converted to Catholicism at the time of his marriage, and this work may have been commissioned by a Catholic institution.

Northern allegories of the Catholic faith were limited to a rather specific iconography. The woman here is a personification of Faith; the crushed snake in the foreground represents the triumph over sin. The colors worn by Faith, white and blue, may represent the virtues of purity and truth. Despite the subject matter, Vermeer remains concerned with the depiction of objects, space, and light. The simplification and hardening of the light in this painting are characteristic of the artist's late style.

Joachim Friess

German (Augsburg), ca. 1579–1620

AUTOMATON: DIANA ON A STAG, ca. 1620

Silver, partially gilt, encasing a movement of iron and wood; H. 14¼ in. (37.5 cm)

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.746)

Renaissance Augsburg was, after Nuremberg, the greatest of the German manufacturing and commercial cities, and a ready supply of silver enabled its guild of goldsmiths to fashion great numbers of richly ornamented vessels for export. This automaton, in which the goddess Diana, designed in a Late Mannerist style, is seated on a hollow-bodied stag with a removable head, functioned as a drinking vessel. A mechanism in the base causes the automaton to roll about on a tabletop in a pentagonal pattern and then stop; the person before whom it stopped would have to drain the contents. Diana's quiver and arrow and the jewels set in the trappings of the stag are modern replacements.

German (Dresden), 1606

PARADE RAPIER

Steel, gilt bronze, various jewels and seed pearls, and traces of enamel; L. 48 in. (121.9 cm)
Fletcher Fund, 1970 (1970.77)

Israel Schuech (active ca. 1590–1610), swordcutler to the court of Saxony, fashioned the magnificent hilt of this rapier for Christian II, duke of Saxony and elector of the Holy Roman Empire. Of cast bronze, richly gilt and formerly enameled, the slender branches of the guard are covered with intricate strapwork and tiny allegorical figures and sparkle with jewels and pearls. Such lavishly decorated sword hilts were appreciated as masculine jewelry and adjuncts to the prince's costume, reflecting his taste, social status, and wealth. Although probably never intended for use in self-defense, the sword is mounted with a blade by Juan Martinez (active late 16th century), the most renowned of the celebrated swordsmiths of Toledo.





Alexandre-Jean Oppenordt

(cabinetmaker)

French, 1639–1715

SMALL DESK, 1685

Oak, pine, walnut veneered with red tortoiseshell, engraved brass, ebony, and Brazilian rosewood; gilt-bronze mounts;
H. 30¼ in. (76.8 cm)

Gift of Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 1986
(1986.365.3)

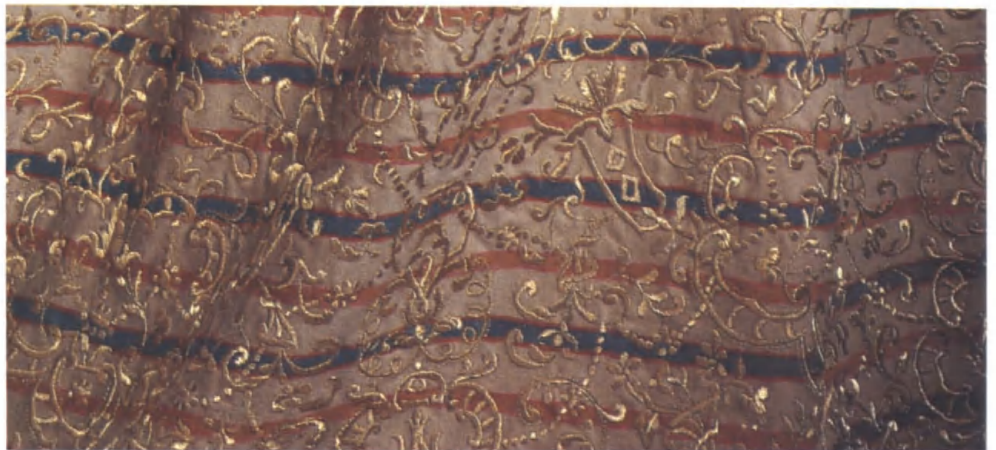
This is one of a pair of desks made in 1685 for Louis XIV's study at Versailles. Oppenordt, the cabinetmaker, had been given a royal appointment the previous year with the title *Ébéniste Ordinaire du Roi*. Jean Berain, *Dessinateur du la Chambre du Roi*, designed and possibly engraved the elaborate brass inlay, which depicts many of the symbols of the Sun King. The desk belongs to a type of furniture called *bureaux brisés* (literally, "broken desks"); the front half of the top folds back to reveal a writing compartment veneered with Brazilian rosewood and fitted at the back with four drawers.

British (Norfolk), ca. 1695

FORMAL DRESS

Gray-brown striped wool embroidered with silver-gilt wrapped thread
Rogers Fund, 1933 (33.54 ab)

This is the earliest complete European costume in the Museum's renowned Costume Institute, and it is considered the finest example of its kind extant. The style of the two-piece dress is known as a mantua, or open robe, and petticoat, a fashion followed with minor variations through the end of the 18th century. The mantua is drawn away from the front and draped at the back to reveal the richly decorated petticoat ornamented in an embroidery pattern of French derivation in satin and stem stitches. The thread of silver gilt wound on a yellow silk core is worked perfectly on both sides along the border of the robe and train so that when the skirt is draped, the beauty of the embroidery is uninterrupted as it cascades into folds.



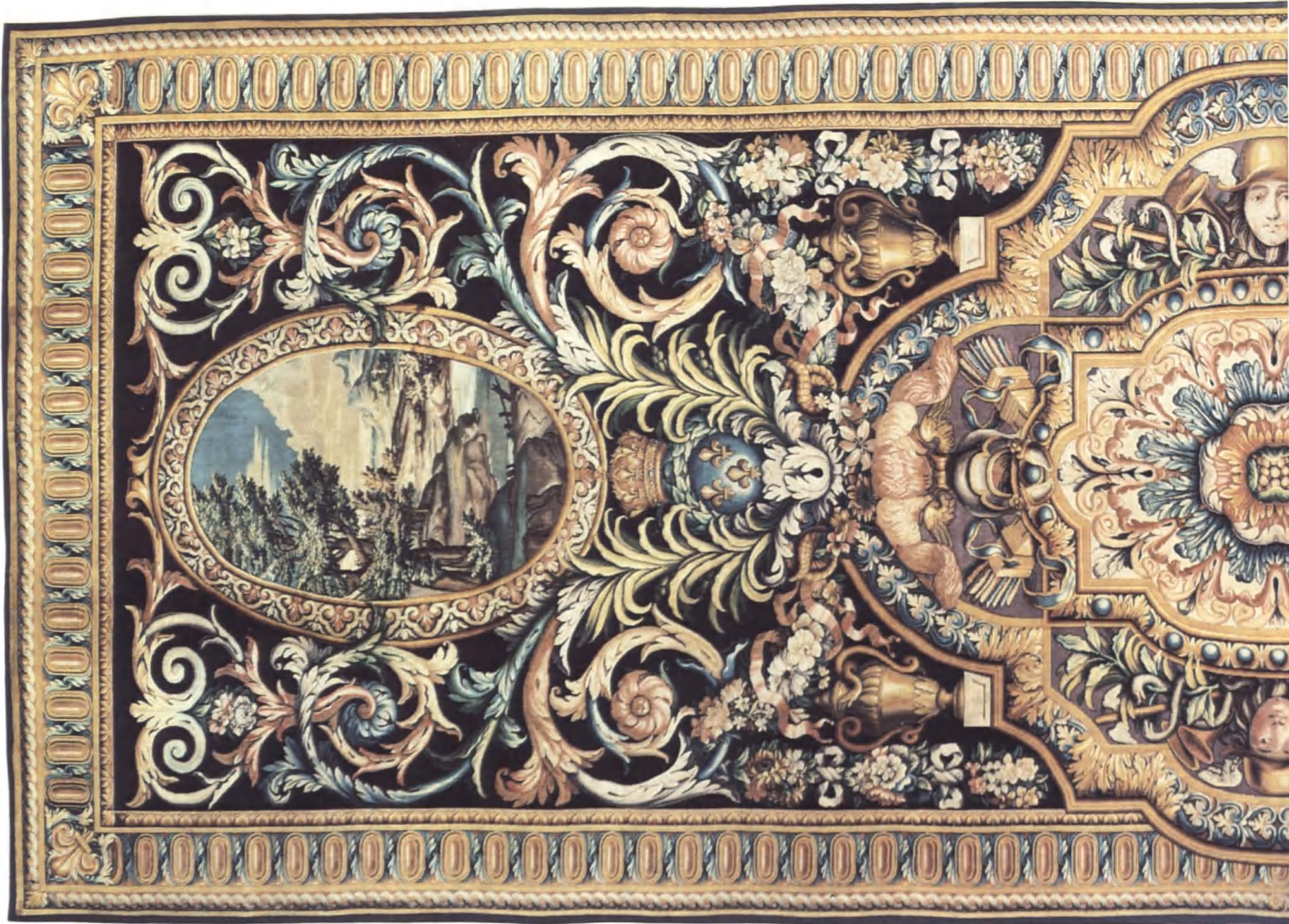
French, Paris, Savonnerie Manufactory, 1680
CARPET

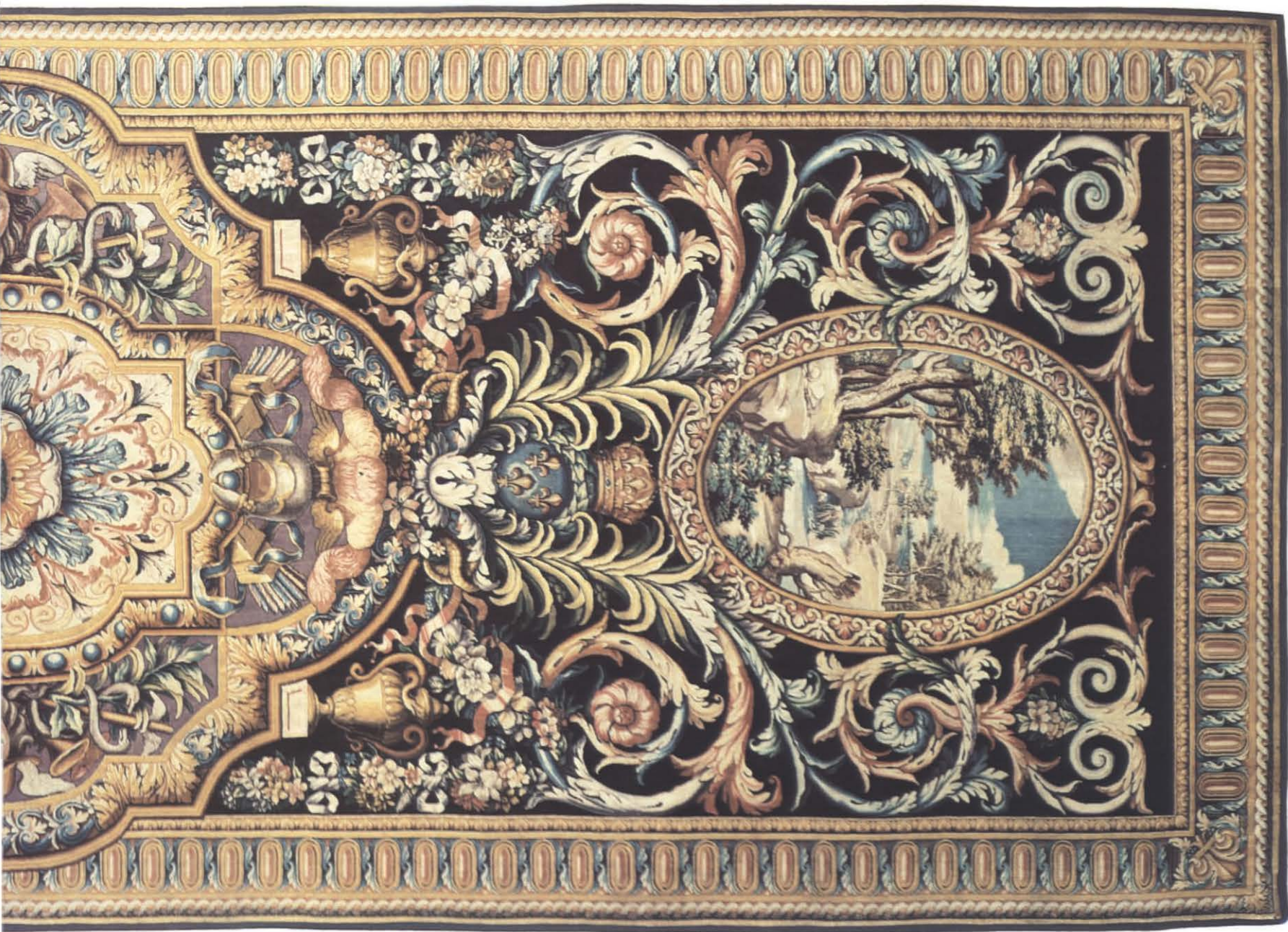
Knotted and cut wool pile; 29 ft. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. $\times$
10 ft. 4 in. (9.09 $\times$ 3.15 m)
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman,
1976 (1976.155.114)

This carpet is one of a series of 92 made for the *grande galerie* of the Louvre after designs by Charles Lebrun (1619–1690), *premier peintre* of Louis XIV. In 1663 he was appointed to supervise the Savonnerie manufactory, a carpet-weaving works near

Paris. He started the designs for the Louvre in 1665, and the first carpets were put on the looms in 1668. These carpets, among the most extraordinary ever made in Europe, have about 90 Ghiordes knots per square inch. The carpet illustrated here, one of the finest of the more than 50 known to have survived from the series, was delivered in 1680. The carpets were designed to harmonize with and echo the architecture and decoration of the gallery. The field of each carpet is divided into three sections: a large central compartment and a smaller

medallion or cartouche at each end, which framed either a landscape, as in this example, or an imitation bas relief. Stately acanthus scrolls, naturalistic flowers gathered in garlands or bouquets, and decorative motifs drawn from antiquity fill the interstitial spaces. Emblems of royalty are prominent on every carpet. Here three fleurs-de-lis of France are shown surmounted by a royal crown; in the center are arms and trophies testifying to the military power of the king.





ASIA





India and Southeast Asia



THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES, the three great Asian civilizations—those of India, China, and Japan—have each nurtured a distinctive artistic tradition. Each has been influenced by foreign invasions, cultural or military, and each has been changed by these experiences while con-

tinuing to evolve in ways unique to itself. But throughout the social and political changes, a tradition of esteem for art and artists has been maintained in Asia and has resulted in the preservation and study of ancient art and the production of a vast library of scholarship that records the lives of artists, theories of art, and relationships between artists and patrons.

Cultural associations and influences have passed back and forth across Asia. From the fourth until the tenth century A.D., Buddhism united the area in a manner never repeated thereafter. Indeed, long after Buddhism became a dead religion in India, its birthplace, it remained a vital power in the rest of Asia. From the fourteenth century on, Islam remade the arts of India in fundamental ways, just as it had already changed Indian society. Confucianism spread from China to Japan, while Shinto remained alive only in its native Japan. With all their disparities, however, the civilizations of Asia have consistently been more closely related to each other than to the cultures of other regions. Asian religions share a veneration of mysticism and meditative philosophy and of the natural world that distinguishes Asia from any other large region of the world.

In ancient India the most esteemed art form was sculpture. Princely patrons of Buddhism and Hinduism, the dominant Indian religions until the spread of Islam, sponsored the construction of magnificent temples, which required monumental sculpture and painting as well as miniature bronze altars. Following the spread of Buddhism, places of worship were built throughout China, Japan, and Southeast Asia.

In India, as in other parts of Asia, Buddhism joined more ancient traditions of indigenous cultures. Thus, the stunning artifacts of the Indus Valley civilization of the third and second millennia B.C. incorporate some of the artistic elements found in the beginnings of Buddhist art two thousand years later. The Gupta period of India, which ran from the beginning of the fourth to the beginning of the sixth century A.D., was the classical age of Indian sculpture and painting, during which Indian traditions achieved a beautifully expressive ideal form.

Among the nations of Southeast Asia, Cambodia is especially well represented in the Metropolitan Museum. Generally speaking, Cambodian art places greater emphasis upon the abstract than does its Indian prototype, suggesting philosophies and beliefs that differed from religious systems elsewhere.

(OVERLEAF)

Indian (Mathura), ca. 5th century

STANDING BUDDHA

Mottled red sandstone; H. 33 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (85.4 cm)

Purchase, Enid A. Haupt Gift, 1979 (1979.6)

This well-modeled and elegantly proportioned Buddha exemplifies the style developed in the holy city of Mathura during the Gupta period. The serene face is full, with rounded cheeks, fleshy lips, almond-shaped eyes, and high, gracefully arched eyebrows. The clinging garment, with a linear pattern of stringlike folds, reveals the body underneath. The right hand, now missing, was originally raised in the fear-allaying gesture *abhaya mudra*, and the lowered left hand holds a portion of the garment. The immutable composure and calm magnificence, characteristic of the finest early South Asian sculpture, are presented to the worshiper as the ultimate fulfillment.

(OPPOSITE)

Indian (Tamil Nadu, Tanjore region),

third quarter of 10th century

STANDING VISHNU

Bronze; H. 33 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (85.7 cm)

Purchase, John D. Rockefeller 3d Gift, 1962
(62.265)

The monumental style and superb casting of this image of Vishnu exemplify the high achievement of early Chola art. Vishnu the Preserver is most commonly portrayed, as here, holding militant attributes befitting his protective role. In his upper right hand, he is holding a *chakra*, a flaming disk that was a martial implement; his upper left hand displays a conch shell, used as a trumpet in battle.

(LEFT)

Indian, 19th century

MAYURI

Wood, feathers, various other materials;

L. 44 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (112 cm)

The Crosby Brown Collection of Musical Instruments, 1889 (89.4.163)

A type of bowed sitar, the *mayuri* is one of many Indian musical instruments incorporating animal forms. *Mayuri* means "peacock" in Sanskrit.



Indian (Karnataka), ca. 14th century

YASHODA AND KRISHNA

Copper; H. 13 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (33.3 cm)

Purchase, Lita Annenberg Hazen Charitable Trust Gift, in honor of Cynthia Hazen and Leon Bernard Polsky, 1982 (1982.220.8)

Krishna, the hero of many well-loved stories and whose legends are related in the *Bhagavata Purana*, the great Hindu epic, was threatened as an infant by the wicked tyrant Kamsa. His parents, in order to protect the young god, hid him with a cowherd and his wife, Yashoda. Depictions of Yashoda holding her foster son are rare, especially in sculptural form. Here she nurses the infant god, cradling his head with one hand and gathering him close with the other. This statue is assuredly one of the most intimate and tender portrayals in the history of Indian art.

Pakistani (Gandhara region),

ca. 2nd–early 3rd century

STANDING BODHISATTVA

MAITREYA

Gray schist; H. 64 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (163.2 cm)

Purchase, Lita Annenberg Hazen Charitable Trust, 1991 (1991.75)

This large, magnificent sculpture represents the most popular image in Gandharan art—the bodhisattva—with the exception of representations of the Buddha. The bodhisattva is a being who has accumulated sufficient merit and wisdom to attain nirvana and escape the cycle of death and rebirth, but chooses to remain on earth to help others achieve salvation. Represented in this important image is the bodhisattva Maitreya, the messianic deity who will become the Buddha for the next great world age. Maitreya is identifiable by a fragment of the sacred-water flask held in his left hand and by his characteristic double-loop topknot, reminiscent of the Hellenistic *krotilos* worn by the *Apollo Belvedere*.

Gandharan art, created during the reign of the Kushans, a nomadic people of Scythian origin who became Buddhist converts, couples Buddhist iconography and a sculptural style markedly dependent on Hellenistic and Roman prototypes, a classical legacy in part of Alexander the Great.





Tibetan, ca. 1300

PORTRAIT OF GREAT TEACHER
SURROUNDED BY LAMAS AND
MAHASIDDHAS

Opaque watercolor and gold on cloth;
27 × 21½ in. (68.6 × 54.6 cm)
Purchase, Friends of Asian Art Gifts, 1987
(1987.144)

The rarity, beauty, and unique iconography of this painting make it an important addition to the small corpus of extant early Tibetan *thankas*, as well as one of the finest early Tibetan works of art in the Metropolitan's collection. The identity of the central personage is problematic. He is portrayed as an adept of Tantric (Esoteric) Buddhism, balancing a magic horn with the fingers of his raised right hand and holding in the palm of his left hand a casket surmounted by a snow lion, the vehicle of the bodhisattva of divine knowledge. The figure is seated on an elaborate throne placed within a frame representing mountains, and he is naked except for a loincloth, a yellow helmet, and elaborate jewelry—decorated with crossed thunderbolts and small standing figures. The inscriptions of most of the other personages in the *thanka* allow them to be identified as lamas of a Tibetan monastery, or 8 of the 84 Mahasiddhas (perfected ones), the spiritual fathers of Tantrayana Buddhism.



Cambodian (Angkor period), mid-11th century
KNEELING FEMALE DEITY

Bronze with traces of gold, inlaid with silver;
H. 17 in. (43.2 cm)
Purchase, Bequest of Joseph H. Durkee, by
exchange, 1972 (1972.147)

This sculpture of a goddess or noblewoman ranks as one of the most important and beautiful Khmer bronzes outside Cambodia. Kneeling with her left leg

beneath her and her right knee raised, the goddess lifts her hands above her head in a gesture of adoration. She wears a pleated sarong secured by a sash with jeweled pendants. The left hem of the sarong is folded over to create a frontal panel of cloth resting between the legs and terminating in a "fishtail" silhouette reminiscent of earlier Khmer styles. She is wearing jeweled armlets, bracelets, anklets, and a necklace; her hair is arranged in vertical bands of a

quatrefoil pattern alternating with a bead motif.

This regal beauty is superbly modeled of soft generalized forms, with a surface made taut as if by an inner expanding energy. Strong but harmonious visual rhythms and contrasts of form are established by the sharp, diamond-shaped silhouettes of the raised arms and the graceful arrangement of the masses of the lower part of the body.



Cambodian (Angkor period), second half of
11th century

DEIFIED KING (?)

Gilded bronze with silver inlays;

H. 41½ in. (105.4 cm)

Partial Gift of The Honorable and Mrs.
Walter H. Annenberg, 1988 (1988.355)

This large sculpture, perhaps of a deified king, sums up the essence and spirit of royal classical Cambodian sculpture. The figure is of such superb quality and possesses such magnetic grandeur that it must be considered one of the most important examples of the arts of Asia in the Museum's collection. The sculpture is in the Baphuon style (about 1010–1110), after a Cambodian step-pyramid temple constructed at Angkor about 1050–66. The condition of the image, the largest complete Cambodian bronze sculpture known, is unparalleled. The fingers, the bow in back, the pendant sash-ends in front, and much of the original gilding are intact. Only the top of the crown, the outer perimeter of the ear pendants—originally probably of some semiprecious material—and the inlays of the eyebrows, mustache, beard, and pupils, have not survived.

(RIGHT)

Nepalese, 9th–10th century

STANDING MAITREYA

Gilded copper with polychrome;

H. 26 in. (66 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1982 (1982.220.12)

This representation of Maitreya, the messianic bodhisattva, is an extraordinarily radiant, elegant, and sensuous sculpture. Not only is this one of the largest early Nepalese bronzes in the West, but it is also the only example of such refined elegance combined with an almost austere economy of surface decoration. A master sculptor with a highly developed aesthetic sensibility produced an image combining a deep spiritual presence with a beautifully arranged system of volumes. The bodhisattva stands in a pronounced *tribhanga* (thrice-bent) posture, but the sensual exaggeration of his pose is most unusual for Nepalese art of this early period. In his lowered left hand Maitreya holds a vessel; in his raised right hand he may originally have held a rosary. He wears the sacred thread across his chest and is adorned with the usual jewelry of the period.





China



THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES, China and Japan have drawn together and apart, now in war and now in peace, influencing each other's customs and arts. But, despite exchanges of power and influence, China remained at all times distinct—influencing more than it was influenced—a major point of cultural and artistic gravity. It absorbed cultural invasions repeatedly, adapting or deflecting them, and then going its own way. Indian Buddhist sculpture had a clear influence on the early Buddhist art of China, for example, but the Chinese ideal was ultimately central and dominant in its evolution and Chinese art has become one

of the few high artistic traditions in the world.

Painting, with calligraphy, is the highest art of China, and it is in the history of that art that we find the most vivid traces of human thought, life, and emotion. Chinese painters ranged widely in subject matter, making pictures from history, myth, legend, and daily life. They painted the colorful forms of birds and flowers and the gods of Buddhism and Taoism; they painted portraits and historical narratives. But it was landscape that attracted the greatest artists through the centuries. The Metropolitan Museum's collection of monumental Chinese Buddhist sculpture and of Chinese painting ranks among the finest outside China.



(OPPOSITE)

Chinese, Northern Wei dynasty, 386–585

STANDING BUDDHA

Gilt bronze; 55¼ × 19½ in. (140.3 × 49.5 cm)

John Stewart Kennedy Fund, 1926 (26.123)

This large Buddha with beaming countenance and open arms radiates the message of hope that swept into China with the Buddhist faith after the collapse of the Han dynasty. The statue probably represents Sakyamuni, the historical Buddha, and was likely made in Northern China under the Northern Wei dynasty in the fifth century.

(DETAIL, LEFT)

Chinese, late Chou dynasty, Warring States Era, 475–221 B.C.

PENDANT

Jade; Diam. 3 in. (7.6 cm)

Gift of Ernest Erickson Foundation, Inc., 1985 (1985.214.99)

Jade has been a highly valued medium in Chinese culture since Neolithic times, even though it is a difficult stone to carve, because it is both fragile and hard. Jade gradually replaced bone fragments in the creation of ritualistic objects and was eventually fashioned into jewelry. This pendant, carved from white jade, dates from the late Chou dynasty, when new tools made finely detailed carvings possible.

Chinese, Five Dynasties period, 10th century

GREEN-GLAZED BOWL

Porcelaneous stoneware; Diam. 10¼ in.

(27 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1918 (18.56.36)

This bowl, with carved and incised dragons under a lustrous green glaze, is one of the great treasures in the Museum's collection of Chinese ceramics. The high-fired clay of the bowl has vitrified so that it is resonant when struck, although the bowl is not true porcelain in the Western sense, since it is neither white nor translucent. Made in the Yüeh kilns in the northern part of Chekiang province, the bowl has three lively dragons carved into its surface.

*Chinese, Early Shang and Chou dynasties,
mid-2nd–early 1st millennium B.C.*

ALTAR SET

Bronze; H. (largest vessel) 18½ in. (47 cm)
Munsey Fund, 1924 (24.72.1–14)

This set of ritual vessels consists of an altar table and 13 vessels for storing, heating, drinking, and mixing wine. Sets of this type were made to commemorate significant events and were used in ritual worship. The birds, antlered bulls, zoomorphic *t'ao-t'ieh* masks, and tiny dragons that abound on the surface of these vessels are part of a complex iconography of animal and abstract elements commonly found on ritual vessels of this period. Remarkable for its completeness, this set was reportedly found in an early Western Chou tomb in Shensi province. Outlines on the altar table indicate that at least the two large buckets and the large and small beakers were part of the original burial. Stylistic differences suggest the pieces were cast at different times in the late Shang and early Western Chou periods.







Chinese, T'ang dynasty, mid-7th century
STANDING COURT LADY

Pottery with painted decoration; H. 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(38.4 cm)

Anonymous Gift, in memory of Louise G.
Dillingham, 1978 (1978.345)

The T'ang dynasty (618–906) witnessed the beginning of the aesthetic appreciation of ceramics as an art form. Although we have no way of knowing whether these potters regarded themselves as creative artists, it is obvious to us today that many of their creations, such as this elegant figure, are works of art. This piece, made of pottery with painted decoration, reflects the aesthetic bias of the age and shows the period's change in women's dress, makeup, and hairstyles. In fact, the figure imparts a distinct impression of haute couture.



Han Kan

Chinese, T'ang dynasty, active 742–56

NIGHT-SHINING WHITE

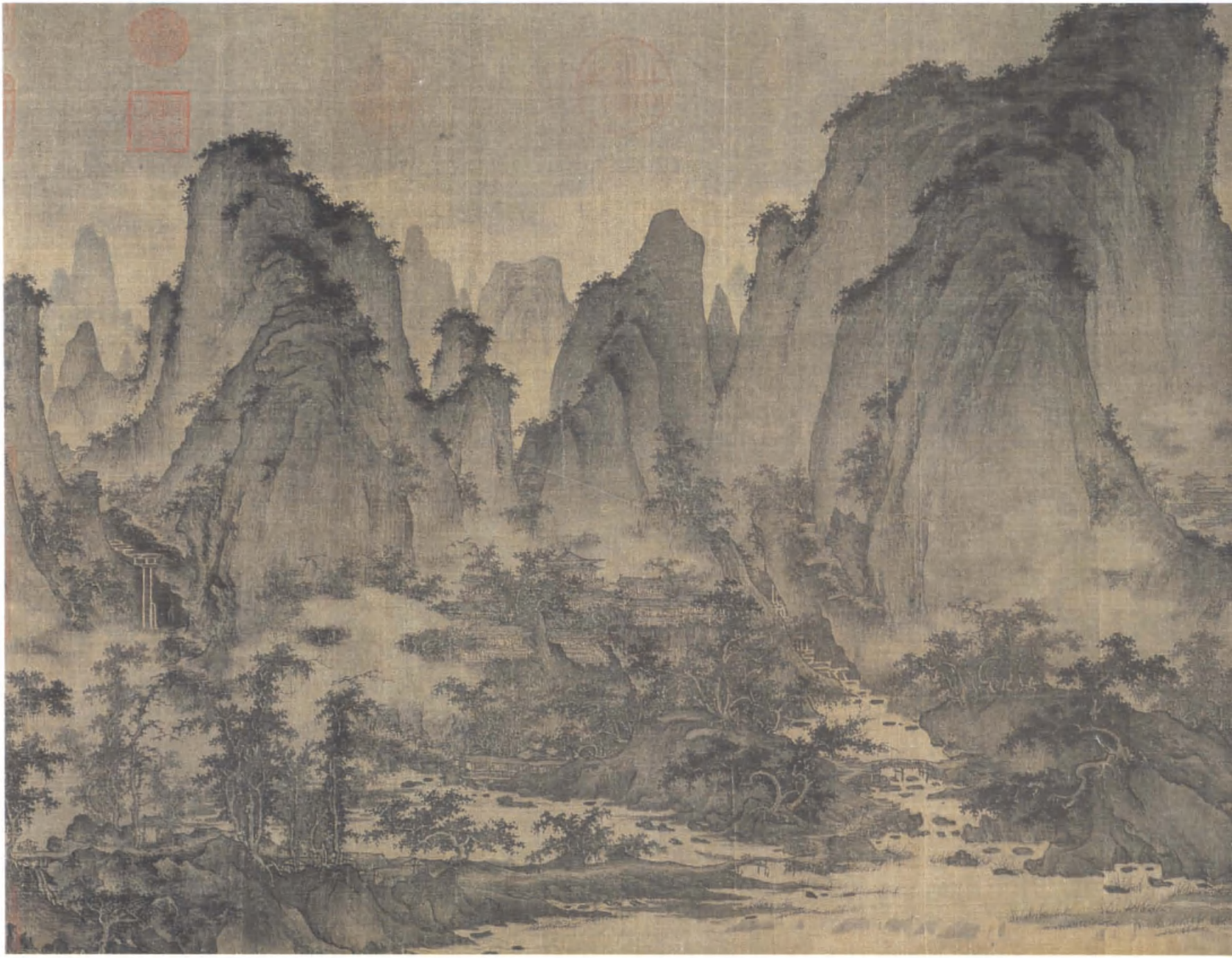
Handscroll, ink on paper; 12¼ × 13⅜ in.

(30.8 × 34 cm)

Purchase, The Dillon Fund Gift, 1977

(1977.78)

Han Kan's portrait of Night-Shining White, a horse of the T'ang emperor Ming-huang (r. 712–56), is one of the most revered horse paintings in Chinese art. Recorded by eminent critics almost continuously from the ninth century onward, this short handscroll has a formidable pedigree in the form of seals and colophons of former owners. The animal, with its wild eye, bristling mane, flaring nostril, powerful flanks, and nervously prancing hooves, radiates strength and energy, even though it is tethered. Han Kan's portrayal of Night-Shining White is elegant for its sole reliance on brushline and shading in ink to convey the full-bodied strength of the steed. This method of achieving the effects of chiaroscuro is known as white painting, or *pai-hua*.



Attributed to *Ch'ü Ting*
Chinese, Northern Sung dynasty,
active ca. 1023–56

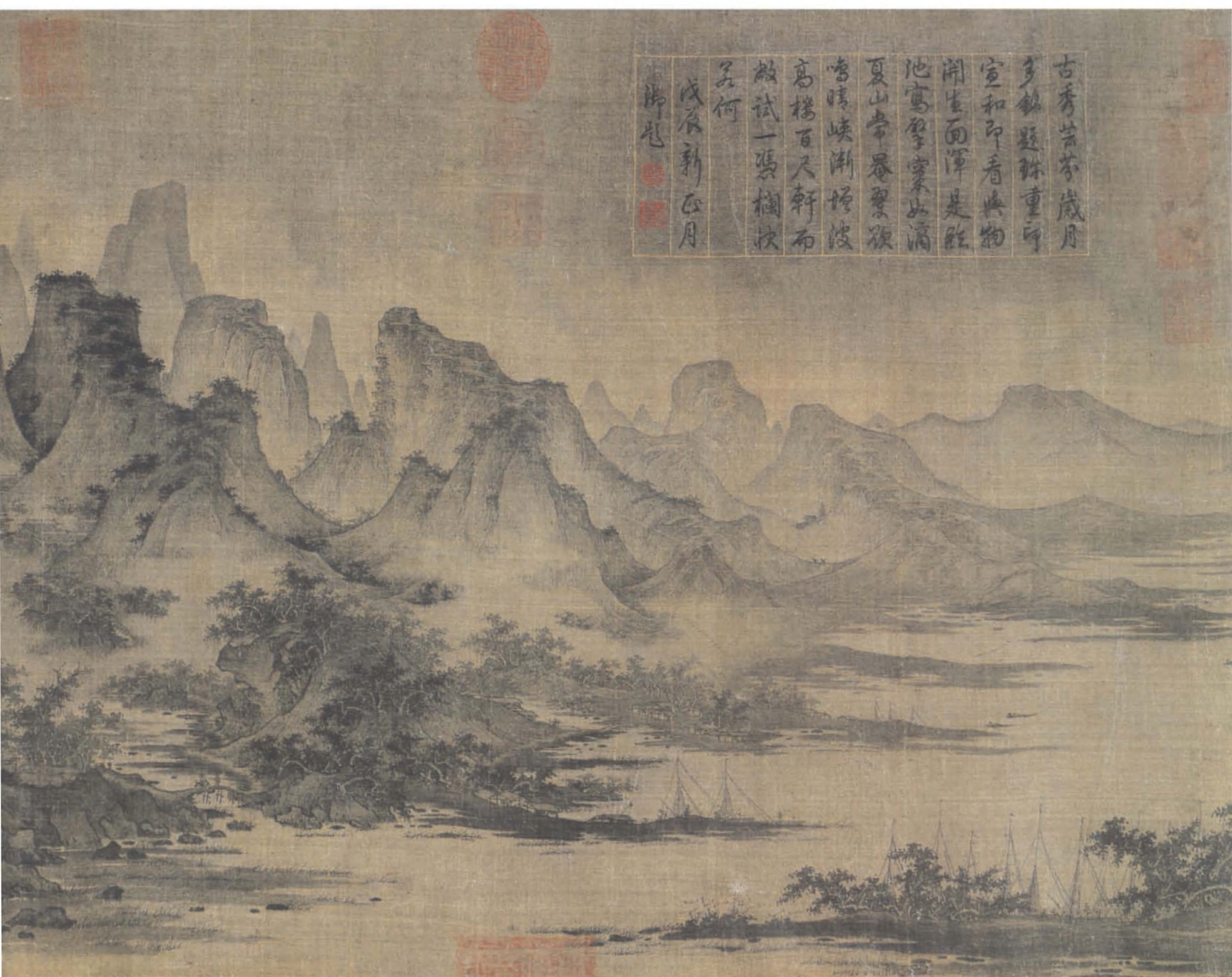
SUMMER MOUNTAINS

Handscroll, ink and light color on silk;
17¼ × 45¼ in. (45.1 × 114.9 cm)
Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1973 (1973.120.1)

The monumental landscape style came into the ascendant in Chinese painting in the first half of the tenth century, reaching its apogee around the middle of the eleventh in the

Northern Sung dynasty. *Summer Mountains* depicts the vastness and multiplicity of the natural world and is, in fact, a hymn to creation itself. In this sublime handscroll a lofty range cresting in a central peak presides over the activity along a river on a summer evening. The rhythm of rising and falling peaks is accented by deep ravines, where temples and waterfalls appear half concealed by mists. Luxuriant trees harbor villages and way stations, where travelers and fishermen, concluding the day's affairs,

take refreshment or put to port. The unfolding at every scale of the cosmic principles, or *li*, inherent in all things is manifest, from the wavelike undulations of the massive range to the shallow rivulets of a depleted summer stream, to precise details of masts and rigging. This depiction of detail without loss of grandeur and harmony in the whole was the unsurpassed achievement of Chinese landscape painting in the Northern Sung.



古秀若芳歲月
多銀題珠重所
宣和印看典物
開生面渾是然
池富學棠如滴
夏山常卷翠嶺
常晴峽漸增波
高樓百尺軒而
敞試一張欄快
名何
戊辰新正月
佛也





*Chinese, Southern Sung dynasty,
12th century*

**EMPEROR MING-HUANG'S FLIGHT
TO SHU**

Hanging scroll: ink and color on silk;
32 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 44 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (82.9 × 113.7 cm)
Rogers Fund, 1941 (41.138)

Although traditionally ascribed to a Southern Sung artist, this painting may represent the continuation of the monumental landscape tradition in Northern China under the Chin tartars. The subject is the flight for safety to Shu, in Szechwan province, of the T'ang emperor Ming-huang (r. 712–56), after 33 years of able rule, following his affair with the concubine Yang Kuei-fei. During the flight, the emperor was confronted by mutinous troops who accused Yang Kuei-fei of complicity in a rebellion against him, and he was forced to assent to her execution. The painting may depict the imperial entourage moving through a somber landscape after her execution. The informally dressed imperial figure at the right appears to be Ming-huang, who seems inconsolable, but the palace guard, following the riderless horse, grins and gloats. The mountain behind the white horse glows with an ethereal luminosity created by a lighter use of ink wash and highlights of gold pigment. Touches of gold on the rocky facets and on the costumes lend regal splendor.



Chinese, Ming dynasty, 1426–35

JAR

Porcelain painted in underglaze blue;

H. 19 in. (48.3 cm)

Gift of Robert E. Tod, 1937 (37.191.1)

The design on this splendid blue-and-white jar was painted on the unfired clay body with cobalt oxide, and the piece was then glazed. When fired, the glaze was fused to the body. It was produced at the Ching-te Chen kilns in northern Kiangsi province in the 15th century after porcelain production had reached the epitome of grace and sophistication manifested in this vessel. The Metropolitan's jar is beautifully shaped and painted with a bristling dragon that combines great power with consummate fluidity of movement.

*Chinese, T'ang dynasty,
ca. 9th century*

FLASK

Stoneware; H. 11½ in. (29.2 cm)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John R. Menke, 1972
(1972. 274)

The dramatic beauty of this T'ang dynasty flask results from the splashes of contrasting color created by two layers of glaze, the lighter-colored one dripping curdlike over

the dark undercoat. The variations in color produced by this dual glaze when the piece was fired range from shades of cream through gray, blue, and lavender to the dark brown of the underglaze. The unusual shape of the flask was probably based on a leather prototype. Stoneware of this kind was produced at several kilns in Northern China, including one at Huang-tao in Honan province, where this piece probably originated.





T'ang Yin

Chinese, Ming dynasty, 1470–1524

THE MOON GODDESS CH'ANG O,
ca. 1510

Hanging scroll: ink and colors on paper;
53½ × 23 in. (135.9 × 58.4 cm)

Gift of Douglas Dillon, 1981 (1981.4.2)

The moon goddess's flat, oval face and elegant fluttering drapery reflect the Ming emphasis on beautiful calligraphic line rather than on three-dimensional form. This hanging scroll, painted by the talented scholar T'ang Yin, is a poignant reminder of that artist's dashed dreams of success in an official career after being involved in an examination scandal in 1499. The goddess holds a cassia branch in her left hand—long a symbol of success in the autumn examinations. T'ang Yin's poem, in bold calligraphy, reads in part: "Ch'ang O, in love with the gifted scholar / Presents him with the topmost branch of the cassia tree."

Chinese, Yüan dynasty, 1206–1368

CANOPY

Silk and gold-wrapped paper strips couched
on silk gauze; 56½ × 53 in.
(143.5 × 134.6 cm)

Purchase, Amalia Lacroze de Fortabat Gift,
Louis V. Bell and Rogers Funds, and Lita
Annenberg Hazen Charitable Trust Gift, in
honor of Ambassador Walter H. Annenberg,
1988 (1988.82)

This silk gauze square, made in China during the Yüan dynasty, was probably used as a canopy for a shrine, being stretched horizontally over an icon or a holy figure in accord with Tibetan Buddhist custom. The fine gauze and marvelously skilled embroidery could have been produced by Chinese artist-craftsmen in the eastern part of the Mongol Empire for a diplomatic gift to a great Tibetan monastery. The central medallion of phoenixes in couched gold circling a flaming pearl among clouds parallels those on large stone slabs found at the site of a Taoist temple built in 1316 in the Yüan capital, Ta Tu (present-day Beijing). The symmetrical vases in each corner with their vinelike arabesques bearing small flowers and leaves come from a different tradition, echoing motifs from India or the late classical world.





Hung-jen

Chinese, late Ming–early Ch'ing dynasty,
1610–1664

DRAGON PINE ON MOUNT HUANG

Hanging scroll: ink and slight color on paper;
75 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 31 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (192.7 × 79.4 cm)

Gift of Douglas Dillon, 1976 (1976.1.2)

The subject of this painting by Hung-jen, a central figure in the Anhwei school of painting, is a tortuously bent pine tree clinging to the summit of a granite peak on Mount Huang. While it depicts a characteristic scene in southeastern Anhwei, the painting also represents the image of a noble and tenacious scholar, bent and twisted by unfolding events, but clinging nonetheless to his native soil. The enduring vitality of the pine is described by Hung-jen in the verse he added to the upper right-hand corner of the hanging scroll.

Chinese, Ch'ing dynasty,
first half of 18th century

TWELVE-SYMBOL DRAGON ROBE

Blue silk warp twill with ornament in
couched, wrapped gold and silver yarns;
L. nape of neck to hem, 56 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (143.8 cm)
Gift of Lewis Einstein, 1954 (54.14.12)

The Manchus ruled China as the Ch'ing dynasty from 1644 to 1911, during which period distinctive habits and social patterns, coupled with admiration for Chinese culture, produced a new official Ch'ing costume, the so-called dragon robe, which combined traditional Chinese symbolism with the simplicity and mobility of the Manchu riding coat.

Dragon robes were decorated with a set of 12 symbols, as in this finely worked robe from the first half of the 18th century. These emblems, which represent qualities of an emperor worthy to receive the Mandate of Heaven, are: the Sun; Moon; Constellations; Mountains; the Dragon; the Five-colored Bird; the group including Cups, a Tiger, and a Long-tailed Monkey; the Water-weed; Millet; Fire; an Ax; and the Fu, a symbol that marks the harmonious relationship of ministers and ruler.



Chinese, Ch'ing dynasty, probably K'ang-hsi period, late 17th–early 18th century

THE GOD OF WEALTH IN CIVIL ASPECT

Porcelain painted in polychrome enamels on the biscuit; H. 23 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (60.6 cm)

Bequest of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1961
(61.200.11)

This porcelain figure of the God of Wealth in Civil Aspect sits on a gilded silver throne, his filigreed hat set with pearls, jade, and

kingfisher feathers, making a truly gorgeous apparition. His elaborately fashioned robes are sumptuously embroidered with a panoply of flowers and auspicious symbols. The figure is decorated in the *famille verte* palette of enamels, but rather than applying them over a glaze—which would tend to fill in and blunt the sharp modeling of the features and the contours of the garments—the painter has applied them directly onto the unglazed, prefired (or biscuited) porcelain body.



Chinese, 1981

THE ASTOR GARDEN COURT

Gift of The Vincent Astor Foundation, 1980

The Astor Garden Court, adapted from a small courtyard in a scholar's garden, called the Garden of the Master of the Fishing Nets, in Soochow, China, was assembled and dressed by 27 Chinese craftsmen and engineers in the Museum. All of its pieces, including pillars, tiles, rocks, and masonry, had first been prepared in China. Pillars throughout the court are made of *nan* wood, a rare species of broad-leaved evergreen prized for its honey-brown color, and the gray terracotta bricks and tiles used in the floor and roofs were fired in an 18th-century imperial kiln in the Soochow area, reopened for the purpose. The courtyard provides an elegant and peaceful environment for contemplation and mental repose.





Japan



CHINA AND JAPAN WERE in constant communion throughout their histories, and an examination of early Japanese painting reveals the extent to which formative elements were imported from China. The strength of this influence, however, was tempered by the fact that Japanese artists never abandoned their own roots, but absorbed influences into the structure of their own deep-seated traditions. The highest achievements of Japanese painters can be measured in narrative handscroll painting, on the one hand, and large-scale decorative painting on the other.

Japanese decorative art, marked by exquisite craftsmanship, is perhaps the most admired in the world. Such objects as ceramics, textiles, armor, and lacquerwork employ aesthetic values to enhance appreciation and utility both. Textures play an important role, from the rough clay and cord markings of a Jōmon jar to the rich, deep, glutinous surface of a lacquer bowl. Patterns may be based on floral motifs, leaves, or natural or abstract elements. Color ranges from gold and brilliant red to pale umber and plain clay. Shapes may be functional or they may be abstract (that is, having no meaning that can now be identified); in either case shapes are aesthetically informed by nuance and subtlety, molded by the hands of an artist. "Is decorative art art?" is a question sometimes asked in the West. In Japan, decorative craftsmen are undoubtedly artists and are acknowledged as such, some even known today as Living Treasures.

Japanese painting clearly embodies this phenomenon: The most attractive achievement of post-thirteenth-century painters has been in the realm of what would, in the West, be called decorative painting. In these Japanese works the decorative qualities function not as design but as expression. Color, design, form, and relationships act directly upon the viewer to arouse emotional responses, and these responses are directly tied to the literary and human associations conveyed through them.

(OPPOSITE, BELOW)

Ogata Kōrin

Japanese, Edo period, 1658–1716

YATSUHASHI

Six-fold screen, ink, color, and gold leaf on paper; $70\frac{1}{2} \times 146\frac{1}{4}$ in. (179.1 × 371.5 cm)
Purchase, Louisa Eldridge McBurney Gift, 1953 (53.7.2)

Ogata Kōrin, one of the most important Japanese artists of the 17th century, was fascinated by irises, which he painted often in many variations and media. The Japanese word "Yatsuhashi" means Eight-Plank Bridge, and the scene refers to a passage from a tenth-century collection of poetic episodes, *Tales of Ise*, familiar to every Japanese viewer.

(LEFT)

Attributed to Sesson Shūkei

Japanese, 1504–1589?

GIBBONS IN A LANDSCAPE (detail)

Pair of six-panel screens: ink on paper; each screen: 62×137 in. (157.5 × 348 cm)
Purchase, Rogers Fund and The Vincent Astor Foundation, Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation and Florence and Herbert Irving Gifts, 1992 (1992.8.1,2)

Celebrated as noble creatures in China for more than 2,000 years, gibbons were adopted by Zen Buddhism as a religious metaphor for the underlying unity of all sentient beings.





Japanese, middle Jōmon period,
ca. 3000–2000 B.C.

JŌMON JAR

Clay with applied, incised, and cord-marked decoration; 27½ × 16½ in.

(69.9 × 41.9 cm)

The Harry G. C. Packard Collection of Asian Art, Gift of Harry G. C. Packard and Purchase, Fletcher, Rogers, Harris Brisbane Dick and Louis V. Bell Funds, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest and The Annenberg Fund, Inc. Gift, 1975 (1975.268.182)

This earthenware food vessel, which comes from northeastern Japan, is remarkable for the fine quality of its clay and for its sophisticated decoration. The herringbone pattern on its body was produced by cords knotted together and twisted in opposite directions. Slender strips of clay were applied to create the geometric relief pattern on its flared quatrefoil rim. Sharp sticks were used to make the linear incisions. This jar is a prime example of the earliest ceramics, known as Jōmon, or “cord marked,” after its distinctive textured surface decoration, produced by the earliest inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago.

Japanese, late Heian period, 12th century
FUDŌ MYŌ-Ō

Wood with color and gold leaf; figure without base: H. 63¾ in. (161.9 cm)

The Harry G. C. Packard Collection of Asian Art, Gift of Harry G. C. Packard and Purchase, Fletcher, Rogers, Harris Brisbane Dick and Louis V. Bell Funds, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest and The Annenberg Fund, Inc. Gift, 1975 (1975.268.163)

This statue of Fudō, whose name means “immovable” and who is a staunch guardian of the Buddhist faith, warding off enemies of the Buddha with his word of wisdom and binding evil forces with his lasso, was the central icon of the Kuhon-ji Gomadō in Funasaka, some 20 miles northwest of Kyoto. A symbol of steadfastness in the face of temptation, Fudō is one of the most commonly depicted of the Esoteric Buddhist deities known as Myō-ō, “Kings of Brightness.” Here his youthful, chubby body and his skirt and scarf are modeled with the restrained, gentle curves typical of late Heian sculpture. Fudō’s hair was once painted red and his flesh dark blue-green.





Japanese, Momoyama period, ca. 1600

BATTLE OF THE HEIJI ERA

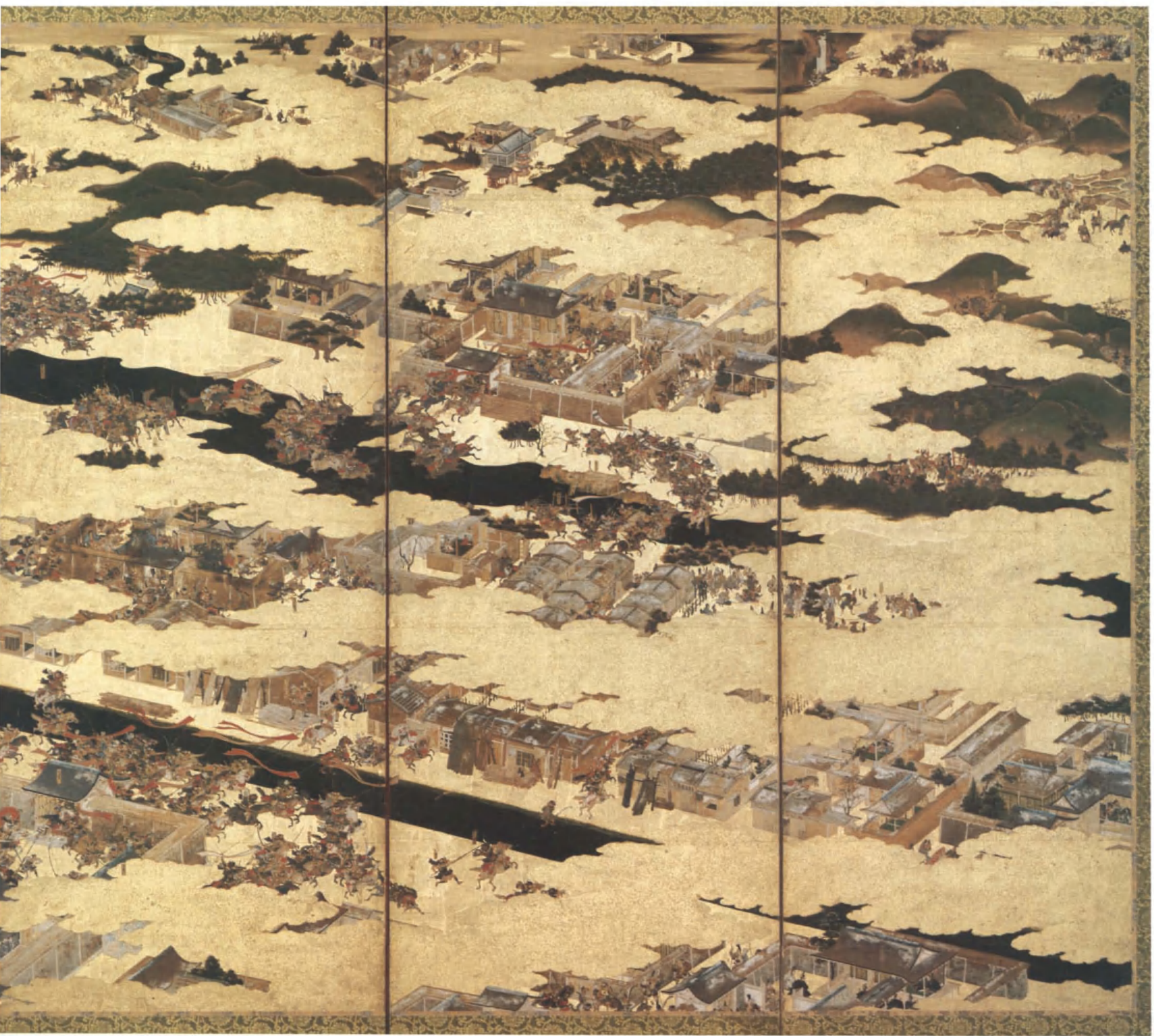
Ink, color, and gold leaf on paper;

60% × 140% in. (154.6 × 355.6 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1957 (57.156.4)

This scene comes from one of a pair of six-fold screens painted by an unknown artist of the Tosa school skilled in the traditional

narrative handscroll style, depicting the bloody uprisings that occurred during the Hogen and Heiji eras in the latter half of the 12th century in Japan and which served as sources of inspiration for generations of artists. Initially, these military dramas were recounted in the form of handscrolls, but from the late 16th century they were often adapted and rearranged for use on large-



scale screens with dazzling gold grounds, as we see here.

These two screens set before us the drama of the two insurrections, scene by scene. The locale for most of the action is the capital, Kyoto, but the artist did not hesitate to switch the scene to Mount Fuji, located far to the north. The artist has distributed the actions as best fitted his

artistic vision rather than placing them chronologically. The viewer gets a bird's-eye view because of the painter's technique, typical of Japanese artists, of looking from above at an oblique angle. Sliding doors and roofs of palaces are pulled back so that we can see the scenes taking place inside as well as outside.



Japanese, Momoyama period, ca. 1596–1600

WINE CONTAINER

Lacquered wood; H. 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (25.1 cm)
Purchase, Gift of Mrs. Russell Sage, by
exchange, 1980 (1980.6)

This sake container (*chōshi*) is typical of a distinctive style of lacquer ware of the Momoyama period (1568–1615), known as *Kōdaji*. This name derives from that of the

Kyoto temple which serves as the mausoleum of the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–1598). The decoration of the vessel comprises two uneven sections separated by a zigzag “lightning bolt” line. One side has a naturalistic rendering of chrysanthemums against a plain black ground, and the other has paulownia-leaf crests, more stylized, adopted by Hideyoshi. These crests are set against a ground sprinkled with gold and silver particles.

*Japanese, late Kamakura period,
early 14th century*

ARMOR (YOROI)

Lacquered iron and leather, silk, stenciled
leather, gilt copper; H. as mounted 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(95.3 cm)

Gift of Bashford Dean, 1914 (14.100.121)

This is a fine example of a medieval *yoroi*. This type of armor has a cuirass that wraps around the body and is closed by a separate panel (*waidate*) on the right side and by a deep, four-sided skirt. In use from around the 4th to the 14th century, *yoroi* were generally worn by warriors on horseback. The breastplate bears the image of the powerful Buddhist deity Fudō Myō-ō, whose fierce mien and attributes of calmness and inner strength were highly prized by the samurai. The helmet, long associated with this armor, dates from the middle of the 14th century.





Japanese, Edo period, late 17th century

WOMAN'S ROBE (KOSODE)

Satin, tie-dyed, stitch-resisted, embroidered with silks, and couched with silk yarns wrapped in gold; L. 53½ in. (135.9 cm)

Purchase, Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation Gift, 1980 (1980.222)

The *kosode*, a garment with short hanging sleeves worn by both men and women, was the precursor of the modern kimono. This robe reflects the taste of the Genroku era (1680–1700), when the wealthy merchant class was beginning to dominate society. The bold asymmetrical design and soft, sumptuous colors are typical, as is the use of a variety of techniques to create a single garment. Hanging in the center of the robe's back is a branch with enormous cherry blossoms in tie-dye and stitch-resist. Below this branch, cherry blossoms float in front of zigzags suggesting the cypress slats of a garden fence.

Kitagawa Utamaro

Japanese, 1753?–1806

COURTESAN HOLDING A FAN,
ca. 1793

Woodcut; 14½ × 9¾ in. (36.8 × 23.8 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1922 (JP 1367)

Utamaro, one of the most influential print designers of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, drew women in all walks of life—at home, at work, or at play with their children. A careful observer of human psychology and physiognomy, Utamaro originated the *ōkubi-e*, “bust portrait,” in which the head and torso of a beautiful woman are set against a luxurious mica background. This print probably depicts a famous beauty of Shinagawa, the pleasure district of Edo (present-day Tokyo). Typical of Utamaro's style, the courtesan is shown in three-quarter view, her head tilted slightly downward. The printing of her elaborate coiffure is so fine that each strand of hair can be distinguished. She holds a fan with a refreshing view of Edo Bay, which was visible from the pleasure district.



1700–1900 IN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES





EL S. D. MANUEL OSORIO MANRIQUE Y ZUÑIGA S. D. G. N. S. NACIO EN A. D. 1778

Europe



THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IN Europe witnessed unexpected reversals in the creative and critical fortunes of the major schools of European painting. The Golden Age of Dutch painting hardly lasted through the end of the seventeenth century; Spain never found among its native ranks a worthy successor to Velázquez until Goya appeared in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Venice, which had not had a vigorous Baroque movement, emerged as the most admired and productive school of painting in Italy, presided over by Giovanni

Battista Tiepolo. Italy in the eighteenth century continued to be the crossroads of Europe; indeed, this was the century of the Grand Tour, when no gentleman's education was complete until he had seen Rome and Venice. English lords and the princes of central Europe formed massive collections of Italian art, replacing the Roman Church as a primary employer of painters. Ultimately, however, the momentum of artistic creativity passed to France, which produced such major artists as Watteau, Chardin, Boucher, and Fragonard.

The eighteenth century is often labeled the Age of the Rococo, a reference to the brilliance of French art during this period. The term described the style of interior decoration that flowered during the reign of Louis XV, an age when art and manners were secular in outlook, an age in which royal mistresses dictated not only state policy but also artistic agendas.

The Venetian and French schools of painting were the most compelling manifestations of the sensual, pleasure-loving aspect of eighteenth-century culture. This age was split, however, as the seventeenth century had been, between the deep impulse of emotion—the Rococo—and an admiration for the intellectual attainments of classical antiquity and modern science on the other. In the second half of the eighteenth century the arts were marked by a Neoclassical style and the spirit of open-minded inquiry that was the basis of the Enlightenment.

This was an era of contradictions: unparalleled luxury and abject poverty; absolute monarchs and republican pamphleteers; unquestioned faith and reasoned skepticism; Rococo fantasy and classical purity—an epoch that witnessed the splendid waning hours of the old order and the violent birth of the modern age. The Neoclassical style initially gave artistic expression to the Revolution at its most implacable, but still-newer sensibilities were emerging that would characterize the aesthetics of the remainder of the nineteenth century: Romanticism and Realism. In England Fuseli and Blake gave expression to the brooding Romantic spirit. In Spain Goya refused to ignore the real and terrifying world and instead offered up a mirror of human capacity for brutality and compassion. In France Ingres brought classical portraiture to its apex, while Gericault and Delacroix experimented with a brilliant palette and exotic subject matter. But it was finally in the paintings of Turner and Constable in England and Corot, Rousseau, and Courbet in France that the quintessentially nineteenth-century subject emerged: nature precisely observed on site.

In 1874 a group of artists whose work had been rejected the previous year by the official French Salon organized their own exhibition in the studio of the photographer

(OVERLEAF)

Julia Margaret Cameron

British, 1815–1879

ALICE LIDDELL, 1872

Albumen silver print from glass negative;
14¼ × 10¼ in. (36.2 × 26 cm)

David Hunter McAlpin Fund, 1963 (63.545)

Born in Calcutta and educated in Paris and England, Julia Margaret Cameron became an avid photographer at the age of 48. She specialized in portraits, and her subjects included many of the great figures of Victorian arts, letters, and science. Alice Liddell, one of three daughters of Henry George Liddell, the dean of Christ Church, is best known as the model for Lewis Carroll's fictional Alice and also appears in Carroll's own photographs of children.

(OPPOSITE)

Francisco de Goya y Lucientes

Spanish, 1746–1828

DON MANUEL OSORIO MANRIQUE
DE ZUÑIGA, ca. 1792?

Oil on canvas; 50 × 40 in. (127 × 101.6 cm)
The Jules Bache Collection, 1949 (49.7.41)

After Goya was appointed Painter to the King of Spain, Charles III, the conde de Altamira commissioned him to paint portraits of his family, including his youngest son, Don Manuel, born in 1784. The fashionably dressed child holds a pet magpie on a string. In the background three cats stare menacingly at the bird, traditionally a symbol of the soul, which gives the painting a sinister and unsettling character. Goya apparently intended this portrait as an illustration of the frail boundaries that separate a child's world from the ever-present forces of evil.

(LEFT)

Detail from Cézanne's *Still Life with Apples and a Pot of Primroses* (see page 236)

Nadar. The group included Pissarro, Renoir, Cézanne, and Monet, whose painting *Impressionism: Sunrise*, led a prominent and hostile critic to deride the whole group as “impressionists,” a name that stuck. Scorned by the French art establishment and for many years by the public as well, these artists continued to paint works that are now universally admired and acknowledged as perhaps the first true expressions of the modern spirit.

The Impressionists departed dramatically from traditional, academic painting techniques and from the romantic or rhetorical subject matter then in vogue. Instead of subjects taken from remote times and places, they chose to paint the artifacts and everyday activities of modern life. In their work nature ceased to be depicted as ideal and eternal: rather, they showed the instantaneous impression of land, sky, or water in a particular climate and at a particular time of day. Painstaking modeling and traditional perspective were abandoned in favor of short, staccato brushstrokes of color. This radical break from centuries-old tradition eventually led to new and different modes of painting both within the Impressionist circle and in the works of succeeding generations throughout Europe and the United States.



François Boucher

French, 1703–1770

THE TOILET OF VENUS, 1751

Oil on canvas; 42 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

(108.3 × 85.1 cm)

Bequest of William K. Vanderbilt, 1920

(20.155.9)

No French painter of the 18th century was more inextricably linked to court patronage than François Boucher. This picture was commissioned by Madame de Pompadour as part of the decoration for her *cabinet de toilette* at the Château de Bellevue, one of the residences she shared with Louis XV. The cupids and the doves are attributes of Venus as goddess of Love. The flowers allude to her role as patroness of gardens and the pearls to her mysterious birth from the sea. As a painter of nudes Boucher ranks with Rubens in the 17th century and Renoir in the 19th; among his contemporaries he had no equal.



Antoine Watteau

French, 1684–1721

HEAD OF A MAN

Red and black chalk; $5\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{1}{8}$ in.

(14.9 × 13 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1937 (37.165.107)

Watteau was undoubtedly the greatest painter of the French Rococo period. His poignancy and intellectual perspicuity made him unique among his peers. This sensitively modeled head is a preparatory study for the seated figure of Mezzetin as he appears in the painting reproduced at the right. The drawing is a typical example of the draftsmanship of Watteau, who often used a combination of red and black chalk in his figure studies.



Antoine Watteau

French, 1684–1721

MEZZETIN, 1717–19

Oil on canvas; $21\frac{3}{4} \times 17$ in. (55.2 × 43.2 cm)

Munsey Fund, 1934 (34.138)

Mezzetin, a stock character of the commedia dell'arte, the improvisational theater form of Italian origin, was an amorous valet who frequently engaged in the pursuit of unrequited love. Here he is shown playing the guitar before a garden in

which a young woman—perhaps a statue, perhaps the painting of a statue on a stage set—stands with her back turned, presumably rejecting his romantic entreaties. Such complex layering of multiple realities was one of Watteau's preoccupations. He delighted in the depiction of scenes imbued with the ambiguous relationship that existed between stage life and real life—the world of art and the actual world.

Jean Siméon Chardin

French, 1699–1779

THE SILVER TUREEN, ca. 1728

Oil on canvas; 30 × 42½ in. (76.2 × 108 cm)

Fletcher Fund, 1959 (59.9)

Chardin was a contemporary of Boucher, but no two artists could have been more different. Chardin invariably imbued his

deceptively simple compositions with a disregard for mere prettiness. In this still life Chardin has given ordinary objects of everyday life an aura of dignity and value. The cat creates a sense of conflict between the living and dead animals, underscoring a theme common in Chardin's genre scenes: the evanescence of life.



Jean Honoré Fragonard

French, 1732–1806

THE LOVE LETTER, 1770s

Oil on canvas; $32\frac{3}{4} \times 26\frac{3}{8}$ in. (83.2 × 67 cm)

The Jules Bache Collection, 1949 (49.7.49)

This picture exemplifies Fragonard's feeling for color, his sensitive handling of effects of light, and his extraordinary technical facility. The elegant blue dress, lace cap, and coiffure of the woman seated at her writing table must have been the height of fashion at the time this painting was made. The inscription on the letter she holds has given rise to different interpretations. It may simply refer to her cavalier, but if it is read Cuvillere, then the sitter would be the daughter of François Boucher, Fragonard's teacher. Marie Émilie Boucher, born in 1740, was widowed in 1769 and married, in 1773, her father's friend, the architect Charles Étienne Gabriel Cuvillier.







(OPPOSITE)

Giovanni Battista Tiepolo

Venetian, 1696–1770

ALLEGORY OF THE PLANETS AND CONTINENTS, 1752

Oil on canvas; 73 × 54 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.

(185.4 × 139.4 cm)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman,
1977 (1977.1.3)

Giovanni Battista Tiepolo was the most famous Italian painter of the 18th century. His greatest achievement was the decoration of two rooms in the palace, or Residenz, of Carl Philipp von Greiffenklau, prince-bishop of Würzburg, carried out between 1751 and 1753. This painting is the oil sketch presented by Tiepolo on April 20, 1752, for the vast fresco over the staircase of the palace. It shows Apollo about to embark on his daily course across the sky; the deities

around him symbolize the planets, and the allegorical figures on the cornice represent the four continents of the world. Numerous changes were made between the oil sketch and the fresco, but this painting shares with the completed ceiling the feeling for airy space, sun-washed colors, and the prodigious inventiveness for which Tiepolo is admired.

Giovanni Battista Tiepolo

Venetian, 1686–1770

RIVER GOD AND NYMPH, ca. 1740

Pen and brown ink, brown wash, over black chalk; 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (23.5 × 31.4 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1937 (37.165.32)

This drawing is one of many finished drawings Tiepolo made in conjunction with

another important ceiling decoration, *The Course of the Chariot of the Sun*, in the Palazzo Clerici in Milan, painted in 1740. Rather than a preliminary sketch, the drawing was intended to form part of a repertory of motifs for future use. The river god and nymph, perched atop a luminous cloud and bathed in brilliant sunlight, appear without the putto and the oar on the south cornice of Palazzo Clerici and then again, with minor adjustments, on a ceiling in a room of the palace at Würzburg, painted a decade later. The golden brown color of the wash and his use of the white of the paper to suggest the highlights are characteristic of his drawing technique.

British and French, 1763

TAPESTRY ROOM FROM CROOME
COURT, WORCESTERSHIRE

Gift of Samuel H. Kress Foundation, 1958
(58.75.1a)

George William, sixth earl of Coventry, commissioned this room jointly from his architect Robert Adam and from Jacques Neilson, head of the Gobelins Manufactory in Paris. It was the first of a series of five Gobelins Tapestry Rooms designed by Adam for English houses in the 1760s and early 1770s, which were greatly admired for the sumptuous effect of crimson ground

tapestries on the walls and coverings on the furniture. The two tapestries visible in this photograph contain medallions representing *Vertumnus and Pomona as an Allegory of Earth* (left) and *Neptune Rescuing Anemone as an Allegory of Water*, after designs by François Boucher. The set of six armchairs, two settees, and pier table and mirror was carved in 1769 by the London firm of John Mayhew and William Ince. The plaster ceiling, oak floor, marble mantelpiece, carved paneling, and mahogany doors are all original to the room.





French (Paris), ca. 1775–78
ROOM FROM THE HÔTEL DE
CABRIS, GRASSE

Carved, painted, and gilded oak
Purchase, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman
Gift, 1972 (1972.276.1)

The richly carved and gilded oak paneling, or *boiserie*, in this room came from the Hôtel de Cabris in Grasse. The third marquis de Cabris commissioned a residence from Giovanni Orello, a little-known Milanese architect who lived in Grasse, and this Italianate town house was completed in 1774. This paneling for its interior was executed in Paris about 1775–78, together with additional woodwork and furniture.

Owing to misfortunes suffered by the Cabris family, the *boiserie* intended for a small reception room on the second floor may not have been installed until the late 1780s. With its striking Neoclassical ornament carved in relief, the paneling belongs to the early phase of the Louis XVI style. The four sets of double doors display incense burners, or *cassolettes*, in the shape of an antique tripod fashionable in the late 18th century. The panels below are decorated with flaming torches, which, like the incense burners, are surrounded by crossed laurel and olive branches; the curved corner panels are embellished with trophies of musical instruments. The rectangular overdoor panels and the circular frames above the mirrors, surmounted by rose garlands,

were intended for paintings that were never executed. The white marble chimneypiece is contemporary but not original to the paneling; it was made for the Hôtel de Greffulhe in Paris.

Among the fine objects in the Cabris room is a gilded beechwood firescreen, part of a large set of furniture supplied by Georges Jacob (1739–1814) in 1786 for Marie Antoinette's use at the Château de Fontainebleau. Jacob was also responsible for the two gilded walnut side chairs, originally in Marie Antoinette's boudoir in the Palais des Tuileries. The delicate carving of these chairs was likely executed in the atelier of the *sculpteurs sur bois* Jules Hugues Rousseau (1743–1806) and his brother Jean Siméon (1747–ca. 1822) in 1784.





British (Derbyshire), ca. 1706–8

MANTUA AND PETTICOAT

Silk satin damask (probably French), brocaded with polychrome silk floss and two kinds of metal-wrapped thread; L. (center back) 104½ in. (265.4 cm)

Purchase, Rogers Fund, Isabel Shults Fund, and Irene Lewisohn Bequest, 1991 (1991.6.1ab)

In the 1670s the mantua first appeared as an informal gown, a welcome alternative to rigidly boned bodices and heavily pleated trained skirts open at the front over a petticoat. Louis XIV prohibited the mantua at Versailles, but it gained widespread popularity. This superb example is the

earliest complete and unaltered 18th-century mantua known to exist. The fabric is one of the so-called bizarre silks, produced only between 1695 and 1720. It is remarkable to have such an expansive quantity of this rare silk survive in its original usage.

Augustin Pajou

French, 1730–1809

MANTELL CLOCK, ca. 1785–90

Case: gilt bronze, marble, and gilded copper; H. 37 in. (94 cm)

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.2126)

French clock cases were often modeled by

leading sculptors in the 18th century. Pajou first modeled a clock with this subject, only with more figures, for the prince de Condé in 1775. The type entered into commercial production thereafter. Together, the three bronze figures—Eros, a cherub, and Father Time—represent the Triumph of Love over Time.

The LePaute workshop (1774–95; Jean-Baptiste [1727–1802], Pierre-Henry [1745–1805], and Pierre-Basile [1750–1843]) was responsible for the movement.

Nicholas-Noël Boutet

French, 1761–1833

FLINTLOCK RIFLE, ca. 1800

Steel, walnut, silver, gold; L. 43½ in.
(110.5 cm)

Fletcher Fund, 1970 (1970.179.1)

Like French politics and fashion, French gunmaking set the style for the rest of Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries. This tradition continued in post-revolutionary France, where Boutet reigned as the dictator of firearms design. Named *directeur-artiste* of the new state arms factory at Versailles in 1793, Boutet oversaw not only the production of military weapons for the army but also the creation of sumptuously decorated arms for presentation to heroes

and statesmen. The finely crafted silver mounts are of the elegant Neoclassical style so typical of the art created during the age of Napoleon.

British (London), ca. 1840

PIANO

Wood, metal, and various other materials;
H. 37½ in. (95.3 cm)

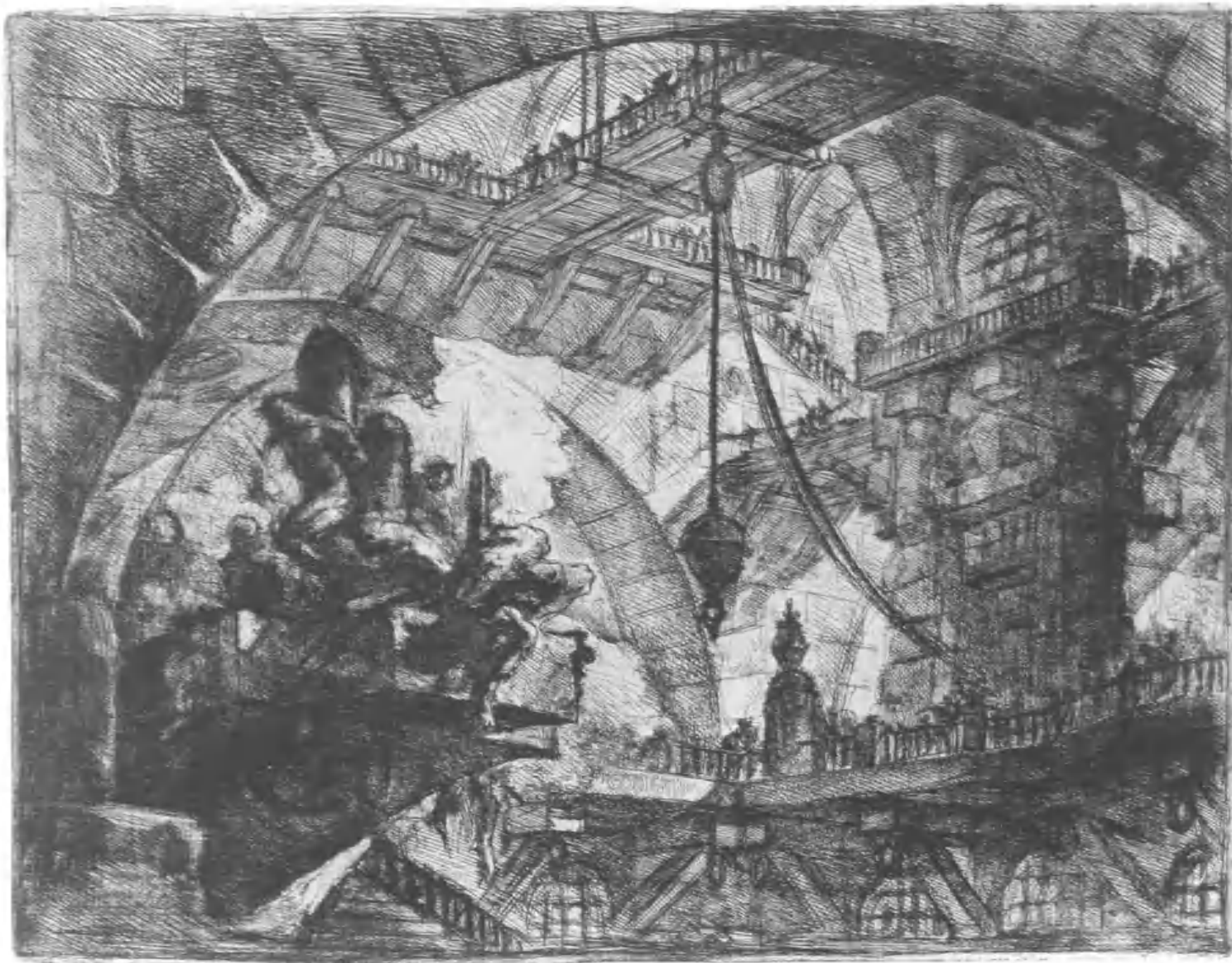
Gift of Mrs. Henry McSweeney, 1959 (59.76)

Erard & Company, the London branch of the famous Parisian firm of harp and piano makers, built this magnificent piano for the wife of the third Baron Foley. The keys and

pedals seem scarcely to have been touched, so we can surmise that this fine instrument was kept merely as an emblem of culture and status. No other piano so richly decorated is known from the period. The marquetry of dyed and natural woods, engraved ivory, mother-of-pearl, abalone, and wire illustrates many musical scenes and trophies as well as animals, grotesque figures, floral motifs, dancers, Greek gods, and the Foley arms. The decor was executed by George Henry Blake, of whom nothing is known. The mechanism, patented by Erard, is the direct ancestor of the modern grand piano “action,” which allows great power and rapidity in technique; hence, Erard’s pianos were favored by virtuosi such as Franz Liszt.







Giovanni Battista Piranesi

Italian, 1720–1778

PRISONERS ON A PROJECTING
PLATFORM, 1749–60

Etching with engraving, sulphur tint or open
bite, burnishing (first state of two);

16½ × 21¼ in. (41.9 × 55.2 cm)

Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1937 (37.45.3 [33])

Although a native of Venice, Piranesi went
to Rome at 20 and spent most of his life in

that ancient city that was to inspire most of
his nearly one thousand etchings. He
studied architecture, engineering, and stage
design, and his best-known series, *Carceri*
(Prisons), consisted of 14 plates depicting
stage prisons that he himself described as
“capricious inventions.” The spatial and
architectural ambiguities, as well as the
dramatic use of light and form, are
characteristic of this series.

Francisco de Goya y Lucientes

Spanish, 1746–1828

THE GIANT, 1818

Aquatint with burnishing (first state);

11½ × 8¼ in. (29.2 × 21 cm)

Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1935 (35.42)

Goya was a fashionable and successful painter of royal portraits and tapestry cartoons when in 1799, three years after surviving a nearly fatal illness, he published a set of 80 satirical etchings called *Los Caprichos*, now the best known of his prints. He went on to produce three other sets of etchings, and at the age of 80 in Bordeaux, he took up the brand-new medium of lithography and created some of the greatest lithographs ever made. This print is not part of any series, although it was done during the period of *The Disasters of War*, between 1810 and 1820, while Spain was devastated first by the armies of Napoleon and then by famine and civil disorder. *The Giant*, of which only six impressions are known, stands out as the most monumental and powerfully sculptural single figure among his dramatic etchings. It resembles the “black paintings” that Goya painted about 1820 on the walls of his house near Madrid. *The Giant* announces not only 19th-century Impressionism but also 20th-century Surrealism and Expressionism.



Jean-Antoine Houdon

French, 1741–1828

ROBERT FULTON, ca. 1803

Plaster; H. 27 in. (68.5 cm)

Wrightsman Fund, 1989 (1989.329)

Houdon made over 150 portrait busts of the great men and women of his age, combining psychological perception with

analytical reason to bring out the individual character of each sitter. His portraits of important Americans remain definitive. He portrayed Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson in Paris and visited the young United States to prepare for his marble statue of George Washington, now in Richmond. Robert Fulton, an inventor, artist, and engineer best known for having

proved the commercial practicality of the steamboat, lived in Paris on and off from 1797 before returning to America in 1806. He made his first steamboat test on the Seine in 1803; he also invented a submarine, the *Nautilus*, while still in France, although he was unable to get support from the French or American governments for its development.



Antonio Canova

Italian, 1757–1822

PERSEUS WITH THE HEAD OF
MEDUSA, 1804–6

Marble; H. 86½ in. (217 cm)

Fletcher Fund, 1967 (67.110.1)

Canova, the preeminent sculptor of the age of Neoclassicism, was a prodigiously talented carver of marble. In Canova's hands the stone yielded brilliant effects, both pristine and sensual, fulfilling the notions of a classical past embraced by his contemporaries. Here Perseus stands coolly triumphant, holding up the severed head of the snake-haired gorgon Medusa, the sight of which will turn anyone into stone for gazing on it. The pose vividly recalls the *Apollo Belvedere*, the work of antiquity most admired in Canova's era. The first version of the *Perseus* was acquired by Pope Pius VII as a replacement for the *Apollo* itself, which Napoleon had removed from the Vatican and shipped to the Louvre in Paris. The *Perseus* was so successful that it remained as a companion to the returned *Apollo* when the Congress of Vienna compelled the restitution of the Napoleonic booty. The Museum's version was purchased from Canova by the Polish countess Valeria Tarnowska.





Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres

French, 1780–1867

PRINCESSE DE BROGLIE, 1851–53

Oil on canvas; 47 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 35 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

(121.3 × 90.8 cm)

Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.1.186)

Ingres was Jacques-Louis David's most celebrated pupil. His severe classical style and his meticulous working procedure epitomized the academic tradition, which he defended vehemently against the French Romantic movement, led by Eugène Delacroix. As a young man, he supported himself almost exclusively with commissioned portraits, but later in his life he hoped to renounce them for "grander things." Nevertheless, the last series of aristocratic portraits he made, between 1845 and 1853, were among the greatest achievements of his maturity.

The princesse de Broglie (1825–1860) was a great beauty and a highly respected woman, the embodiment of the best of the Second Empire aristocracy. Ingres began her portrait in 1851; after accepting the commission he wrote to a friend that it would be his last except for that of his wife. The painting completes his series of aristocratic portraits and is a supreme example of the mastery of technique, the bold use of color, and the understanding of female character for which Ingres is so justly celebrated.

Jacques-Louis David

French, 1748–1825

THE DEATH OF SOCRATES, 1787

Oil on canvas; 51 × 77¼ in.

(129.5 × 196.2 cm)

Wolfe Fund, Catharine Lorillard Wolfe
Collection, 1931 (31.45)

At the approach of the French Revolution, when Greek and Roman civic virtues were extolled as salutary antidotes to the degeneracy of the Old Regime, David triumphed at the Salon with a succession of works, including this one, that gave clear

expression to the moral and philosophical principles of his time. Socrates was accused by the Athenian government of impiety and corrupting the young through his teachings; he was offered the choice of renouncing his beliefs or being sentenced to death for treason. Faithful to his convictions and obedient to the law, Socrates chose to accept his sentence. Here Socrates reaches for the cup of poisonous hemlock while he discourses on the immortality of the soul. *The Death of Socrates* became a symbol of republican virtue and was a manifesto of the Neoclassical style.







Sir Joshua Reynolds

British, 1723–1792

COLONEL GEORGE K. H.
COUSSMAKER, GRENADEER
GUARDS, 1782

Oil on canvas; 93 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 57 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

(238.1 × 145.4 cm)

Bequest of William K. Vanderbilt, 1920

(20.155.3)

Reynolds was the first president of the Royal Academy and the author of 15 discourses on painting, which are classics of the theory of art. In this dismounted equestrian portrait, Reynolds presents Colonel Coussmaker in a pose of casual but studied negligence, the line of his body repeated in the curving neck

of the horse. The summer before Reynolds painted the portrait, he traveled to Flanders and Holland and profited by his observation of Rubens's works, especially in the creation of a free and painterly surface treatment.

John Constable

British, 1776–1837

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL FROM THE
BISHOP'S GROUNDS, ca. 1825

Oil on canvas; 34 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 44 in.

(87.9 × 111.8 cm)

Bequest of Mary Stillman Harkness, 1950

(50.145.8)

Constable in his day was the preeminent painter of the English landscape, and

although he never achieved the overwhelming success of his contemporary Turner, his naturalist's vision had far greater impact on the history of 19th-century painting. In 1822 John Fisher, bishop of Salisbury, commissioned from Constable a view of Salisbury Cathedral. The bishop rejected the canvas, which is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, because it had a stormy sky, and the artist painted a highly finished variant with a bright sky in 1826. The latter is now in the Frick Collection. The figures on the left are the bishop and his wife.



William Blake

British, 1757–1827

Title page from *Songs of Innocence*

Relief etching, hand-painted with watercolor and gold; sheet: 6 × 5½ in. (15.2 × 14 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1917 (17.10.3)

William Blake is the only artist of his rank who is even better known as a poet, and some of his most pleasing works are those he called “illuminated printing,” which fuse picture and word to form a completely integrated and completely personal result. *Songs of Innocence*, published in 1789, comprises 31 illuminated poems; the book was republished in 1794 with *Songs of Experience*, with 54 plates in all. Blake’s books are similar to 15th-century blockbooks, so called because for each page the letters were, like the images, carved from the block rather than printed from movable type. Blake printed his plates in one color only, here a bright red-brown. The pages were then painted, perhaps by Blake himself, in watercolors and gold, so every copy of the book is unique. The colors and gold are especially brilliant in this copy. Blake kept the plates and produced these books over a long period of time, probably according to demand. The watermark on 12 leaves of the Metropolitan’s copy includes the date 1825, indicating that it was made in or after that year.



Joseph Mallord William Turner

British, 1775–1851

THE GRAND CANAL, VENICE, 1835

Oil on canvas; 36 × 48½ in.

(91.4 × 122.2 cm)

Bequest of Cornelius Vanderbilt, 1899 (99.31)

Turner grew from a young art student trained in executing topographical watercolors to the creator of some of the most original landscapes of his time. On his second visit to Venice, probably in September 1833, he created a series of views

of the city that betray on the one hand an ardent interest in recording what he saw and, on the other, a Romantic sensibility that suffused his pictures with a sense of the grandeur of nature and of its magnificent light and color. This picture is based in part on a pencil drawing made during Turner's first trip to Venice in August 1819 and combines two viewpoints along the Grand Canal. It was shown with four other works in May 1835 at the Royal Academy, where it was well received as one of his "most agreeable works."

Honoré Daumier

French, 1808–1879

THE THIRD-CLASS CARRIAGE, 1860–63

Oil on canvas; 25¾ × 35½ in.
(65.4 × 90.2 cm)

H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of
Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.129)

In 1893 Daumier began to depict groups of people in public conveyances and waiting rooms, and for more than two decades he treated these themes in lithographs, watercolors, and oil paintings. His characterizations of travelers document the period in the mid-19th century when the cities of France and their inhabitants were undergoing the immense changes brought

about by industrialization. A lifelong social critic, Daumier was able to infuse his renderings of contemporary life with a broad significance that touched on the inner character of mankind.

(OPPOSITE)

Eugène Delacroix

French, 1798–1863

THE ABDUCTION OF REBECCA, 1846

Oil on canvas; 39½ × 32¼ in.
(100.3 × 81.9 cm)

Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection, Wolfe
Fund, 1903 (03.30)

As a rich source for exotic and dramatically violent themes, the novels of Sir Walter

Scott were immensely popular with Romantic painters. Delacroix, despite his reservations about their literary merit, repeatedly found inspiration in these writings. This picture, painted in 1846 and exhibited in the Salon of that year, illustrates an episode from Scott's *Ivanhoe*, in which the beautiful Rebecca is carried off by two Saracen slaves at the command of the Christian knight who has long coveted her. Intense drama is created as much by the contorted poses and compacted space as by the artist's use of vivid color. Contemporary critics, including Baudelaire, praised the work's spontaneity and power.





Gustave Courbet

French, 1819–1877

WOMAN WITH A PARROT, 1865–66

Oil on canvas; 51 × 77 in. (129.5 × 195.6 cm)

H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs.

H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.57)

Like the odalisques and classical nudes made fashionable by official artists, the erotic content of Courbet's *Woman with a Parrot* appealed to Second Empire taste. Yet Courbet's mastery of flesh—his use of subtly varied pigments in the modeling of the female body—added an illusion of reality that left behind frigid academicism while it approached the sensuality of

Renoir's nudes. This sense of realism was Courbet's failing, in the eyes of some contemporary critics. When the painting was shown at the Salon of 1866, critics censured the artist's "lack of taste" as well as the model's "ungainly" pose and "disheveled" hair. Nevertheless, Courbet continued to regard this as one of his great successes, and it also seems to have made quite an impression on Édouard Manet, who in 1866 painted his own version of the subject (also in the Metropolitan's collection). Paul Cézanne also must have admired the painting, for it is said that he carried a small photograph of it in his wallet.





Rosa Bonheur

French, 1822–1899

THE HORSE FAIR, 1851–53

Oil on canvas; 96¼ × 199½ in.

(244.5 × 506.7 cm)

Gift of Cornelius Vanderbilt, 1887 (87.25)

When Rosa Bonheur exhibited this painting at the Salon of 1853, it was a resounding success. She was already well known for her use of movement, dramatic lighting, and fresh and direct observation, but few of her works achieved the dash and grandeur of *The Horse Fair*, and none attained the same degree of acclaim. It was vastly admired on the Continent, where it was exhibited in Paris, Ghent, and Bordeaux; subsequently, the painting was shown in England and the United States, becoming one of the best-known works of art.

The Horse Fair was preceded by numerous drawings and at least three painted studies that document the artist's exploration of various compositional solutions to the subject. Twice a week for a year and a half she went to the horse market of Paris to make sketches, dressed as a man so as not to attract attention. In arriving at the final scheme, she drew inspiration from the Parthenon frieze, from the noted animal painters Stubbs and Delacroix, and especially from Géricault. Later Bonheur referred to *The Horse Fair* as her own "Parthenon frieze." The painting was apparently retouched by the artist in 1855, repainting passages in the ground, the trees, and the sky that had been criticized for their summary execution when the painting was shown at the Salon.

Jean Baptiste Camille Corot

French, 1796–1875

VILLE-D'AVRAY

Oil on canvas; 21 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (54.9 × 80 cm)

Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection,
Bequest of Catherine Lorillard Wolfe, 1887
(87.15.141)

Throughout his adult life, Corot spent part of each year at the family property in Ville-d'Avray in the environs of Paris. The landscapes painted there in the 1860s and

1870s—views of wooded glades delicately modeled in dull greens, browns, and an exquisite range of silvery grays, all veiled in misty light—won him considerable success during his lifetime. The popularity of such works as this may be related in part to the nostalgia for an arcadian past that was so much a part of contemporary French literature. Corot's late works reflect a vision of nature that combines a classicist's sense of serene order with a romantic's mood of reverie.





Édouard Manet

French, 1832–1883

BOATING, 1874

Oil on canvas; 38¼ × 51¼ in.

(97.2 × 130.2 cm)

H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of
Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.115)

Boating was painted during the summer of 1874, when Manet was working with Monet and Renoir at Argenteuil, a village on the Seine northwest of Paris. The influence of

the two young Impressionist painters on Manet is evident in the subject matter—a celebration of the everyday pleasures of the middle class—and in the fact that Manet's dark, Spanish palette has given way here to high-keyed hues. The flattened composition, in which the high viewpoint causes the water's surface to rise up as a backdrop, is cut off at the edges of the canvas, reflecting Manet's interest, shared with the Impressionists, in Japanese prints.



Claude Monet

French, 1840–1926

GARDEN AT SAINTE-ADRESSE, 1867

Oil on canvas; 38 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 51 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

(98.1 × 129.9 cm)

Purchase, special contributions and funds given or bequeathed by friends of the Museum, 1967 (67.241)

One of the artists who came to be known as Impressionists, Monet spent the summer of 1867 at his father's house in the French resort town of Sainte-Adresse on the English Channel. It was there that Monet painted this picture, which is rendered in

dazzling color. Monet's father and aunt are seated in the foreground facing the sea. His cousin is seen standing with a man, possibly her father, in the middle ground. The direction of the sun tells us that it is mid-morning; the gladiolas tell us that it is mid-summer. The raised vantage point of the picture—Monet was painting in a window on the second floor—divides the composition into three horizontal registers that seem to rise parallel to the surface of the canvas rather than recede into space. In this regard Monet was following the example of Japanese color woodblock prints, which he admired and collected.

Pierre Auguste Renoir

French, 1841–1919

**MADAME GEORGES CHARPENTIER
AND HER CHILDREN, 1878**

Oil on canvas; 60½ × 74⅞ in.

(153.7 × 190.2 cm)

Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection, Wolfe
Fund, 1907 (07.122)

The publisher Georges Charpentier and his
wife, Marguerite Lemonnier, entertained
political, literary, and artistic notables on
Friday evenings, and they commissioned

Renoir to paint this beautifully composed
family portrait. Set in the small, or Japanese,
drawing room of the Charpentier's mansion
in the rue de Grenelle, Renoir depicts Mme
Charpentier with her three-year-old son,
Paul, whose godfather was Émile Zola, and
her six-year-old daughter, Georgette, who
sits on a big Newfoundland dog.





Edgar Degas

French, 1834–1917

DANCERS PRACTICING AT THE BAR, 1876–77

Mixed media on canvas;

29 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 32 in. (75.6 × 81.3 cm)

H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of
Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.34)

Although the dancers appear to be casually observed, the composition was meticulously worked out. The artist's fascination with

form and structure is reflected in the analogy between the watering can (used to lay the dust on the studio floor) and the dancer at the right. The handle on the side imitates her left arm, the handle at the top mimics her head, and the spout approximates her right arm and raised leg. Later in life Degas regretted this visual joke and wished to paint out the can, but the owner of the canvas, a friend of the artist, refused to allow Degas to retouch it.

Edgar Degas

French, 1834–1917

LITTLE FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD
DANCER, cast in 1922 from a sculpture
modeled ca. 1880

Bronze, partly tinted, with cotton skirt and
satin hair ribbon on a base of wood; H. 41¼ in.
(104.8 cm)

H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of
Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.370)

As in his painting, Degas aimed to change the art of sculpture, turning to real life for inspiration and experimenting with new materials and techniques in order to gain his desired effect. The use of everyday materials was one of the most revolutionary aspects of this work. While the Museum's bronze figure wears a gauze skirt and satin hair ribbon, the original tinted-wax sculpture had a wax-covered linen bodice, satin slippers, red lips, and even a horsehair wig. The expression on the model's face is strained, emphasizing the difficulty of her artificial pose. When the sculpture was first displayed in Paris at the Impressionist exhibition of 1881, the extreme realism of *Little Dancer* repelled many viewers, who found the work brutal and coarse.





Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux

French, 1827–1875

UGOLINO AND HIS SONS, carved in 1865–67 from a model of ca. 1860–61

Marble; H. 77 in. (195.6 cm)

Purchase, Josephine Bay

Paul and C. Michael Paul Foundation, Inc.,

Gift, Charles Ulrick and Josephine Bay

Foundation, Inc. Gift, and Fletcher Fund, 1967

(67.250)

This splendid sculpture epitomizes the Romantic preoccupation with extreme physical and emotional states. The subject is taken from Dante's *Inferno*, in which a suspected traitor, Count Ugolino della Gherardesca, is condemned to die imprisoned in a tower with his sons and grandsons. Carpeaux has depicted the moment at which the count, yielding to hunger and despair, contemplates cannibalism. The work, completed during the last year of the sculptor's residence at the French Academy in Rome, caused a public sensation and immediately established Carpeaux as the heir of the French Romantic sculptors of the 1830s. He developed a special reverence for Michelangelo in Rome, and much of the power of the *Ugolino* derives from *The Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel.

Auguste Rodin

French, 1840–1917

ADAM, cast in 1910 or 1911 for the Museum from a model of 1880

Bronze; H. 76¼ in. (193.7 cm)

Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910 (11.173.1)

Rodin is probably the best-known sculptor of the 19th century; in the later part of his life he was immensely popular. Like Carpeaux, he was deeply impressed by the work of Michelangelo and drew on the Sistine Chapel frescoes as a direct source of inspiration. In the *Adam*, which shows the first man being roused to life, Rodin combined elements from the *Creation of Man* in the Sistine Chapel and from the Christ of Michelangelo's *Pietà* in the Duomo in Florence. *Adam* was modeled originally in 1880, and for a time Rodin intended to incorporate the figure into the design for *The Gates of Hell*, which was never constructed. The Museum commissioned this bronze from Rodin in 1910.



Paul Cézanne

French, 1839–1906

STILL LIFE WITH APPLES AND A
POT OF PRIMROSES, ca. 1890

Oil on canvas; 28¾ × 36¾ in. (73 × 92.4 cm)
Bequest of Sam A. Lewisohn, 1951 (51.112.1)

The pattern of leaves against the background is unusual in Cézanne's work, as is the highly finished surface. With the exception of the primroses, the objects in the picture appear frequently in the artist's

still lifes: the scalloped table, the cloth pinched up in sculptural folds, and the apples nested in isolated groups.

Monet owned this canvas. When Cézanne visited Monet at Giverny in 1894, he met the critic Gustave Geffroy, to whom he explained in reference to his still lifes that he wanted to astonish Paris with an apple. Cézanne's contemporaries, including Pissarro, Monet, and Degas, all valued his paintings enormously.





Paul Cézanne

French, 1839–1906

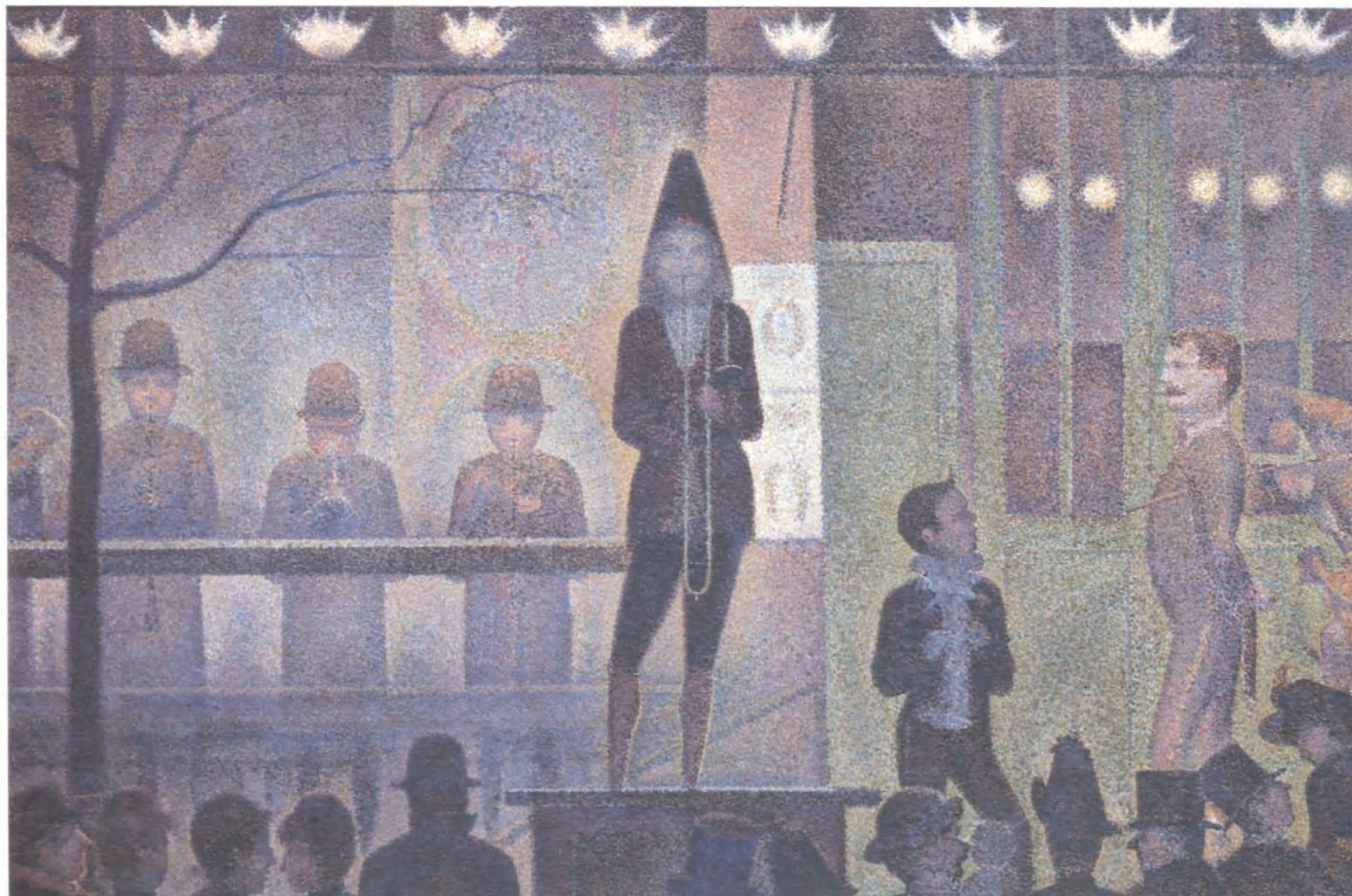
ROCKS IN THE FOREST, ca. 1893

Oil on canvas; 28 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 36 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(73.3 × 92.4 cm)

H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of
Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.194)

Cézanne exhibited with the Impressionists in 1874, and though he shared their plein-air approach, he was preoccupied by other aims. While they sought to capture the fleeting impression of a casual glance, he often emphasized the forms and patterns

that build the structure of a scene. He sought to reveal the inner geometry of nature, “to make of Impressionism something solid and durable, like the art of museums.” This scene showing rocks in a forest is thought to have been observed during one of Cézanne’s working trips to the forest of Fontainebleau, sometime around 1893. Characteristic of his work at this time are the purplish-gray tone of the painting and the thin layers of pigment applied in a manner reminiscent of watercolor technique.



Georges-Pierre Seurat

French, 1859–1891

CIRCUS SIDESHOW, 1887–88

Oil on canvas; 39¼ × 59 in.

(99.7 × 149.9 cm)

Bequest of Stephen C. Clark, 1960 (61.101.17)

In the mid-1880s the depiction of suburban pleasures favored by the Impressionists gave way to pictures of urban entertainment, as writers, poets, and songwriters turned to acrobats, clowns, and café singers for subject matter. Seurat's interest in urban entertainment culminated in *Circus Sideshow*. The scene is a sideshow given in the evening on the street to lure passersby into purchasing tickets to the circus. But instead of being gay and festive, the performance is calm and brooding. Using a fine brush, Seurat has covered the canvas with a myriad of dark violet-blue, orange, and green dots of paint. Although his research in optics was purportedly scientific, the forms are endowed with mystery. Figures seem to levitate in the moody gaslight, musicians and performers are eerily geometric and alienated from the audience, and railings suggest ramps that lead nowhere. In this world where nothing is certain to the eye, Seurat implies a parity between fact and fantasy.



Georges-Pierre Seurat

French, 1859–1891

A WOMAN FISHING, 1884

Conté crayon on paper; 12⅞ × 9¼ in.

(30.8 × 23.5 cm)

Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1951;
acquired from the The Museum of Modern
Art, Lillie P. Bliss Collection (55.21.4)

Seurat's most famous painting is unquestionably *A Sunday Afternoon on La Grande Jatte* (Art Institute of Chicago), a scene of Parisians enjoying their day off on an island in the Seine. Seurat, who wanted

to make the art of painting objective and systematic, completed at least 32 preparatory drawings and oil sketches for the painting, often working out individual figures in separate drawings, such as this crayon study of a woman fishing. The figure is rendered with very little interior modeling, and the contrast between her extremely thin torso and enormous bustle transforms her into an abstract shape. Her face is obscured by her fashionably tilted white hat, emphasizing Seurat's preference for the general over the individual.



Paul Gauguin

French, 1848–1903

IA ORANA MARIA (Hail Mary), 1891

Oil on canvas; 44¾ × 34½ in.

(113.7 × 87.6 cm)

Bequest of Sam A. Lewisohn, 1951 (51.112.2)

In 1883 Paul Gauguin gave up a successful career as a stockbroker to become a painter. From 1886 to about 1891 he lived in Brittany, hoping to find in native Breton culture a people close to nature, unfettered by the complications and sophistication of modern civilization. In 1891 he made his first trip to Tahiti, in search of a still more “natural” world, a kind of Polynesian Garden of Eden. The title of this work—the most important one Gauguin painted during this trip—is native dialect for “I hail thee, Mary,” the angel Gabriel’s first words to the Virgin Mary at the Annunciation. The only elements taken from the traditional representation of the Annunciation are the angel, the salutation, and the halos around the heads of the Virgin and Child. Everything else is Tahitian except the composition, which was adapted from a bas-relief in the Javanese temple of Borobudur, of which Gauguin owned a photograph.



Vincent van Gogh

Dutch, 1853–1890

CYPRESSES, 1889

Oil on canvas; 36¾ × 29¼ in. (93.4 × 74 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1949 (49.30)

Van Gogh painted *Cypresses* in June 1889, not long after the beginning of his year-long voluntary confinement at the asylum of Saint Paul in Saint-Rémy. The cypress represented a kind of perfect natural architecture in van Gogh’s canon of

pantheism: “It is as beautiful of line and proportion as an Egyptian obelisk.” The loaded brushstrokes and the swirling, undulating forms are typical of his late work. The subject posed an extraordinary technical problem for the artist, especially with regard to realizing the deep, rich green of the trees. On June 15, 1889, he wrote to his brother, “It is a splash of black in a sunny landscape, but it is one of the most interesting black notes, and the most difficult to hit off that I can imagine.”



The United States of America



IN THE FIRST QUARTER of the eighteenth century the American Colonies began to develop as a provincial but highly individual society. Trade increased significantly, and large numbers of new immigrants arrived in the middle and southern Colonies. By about 1750 the Colonies were already emerging as a loosely knit group of political entities, each with its distinct social and cultural stamp and commercial capital. Power increasingly came to be wielded by a merchant elite eager to consume luxury goods. American Colonials became more

aware of, and willing to pay for, objects in the latest fashion. The characteristics of English fine and decorative arts of the eighteenth century were mirrored in the American Colonies no less than in Ireland, Scotland, or India. Furniture was arguably the most distinctly Colonial of the decorative arts, with regional schools of cabinetmaking taking shape in Boston, Newport, New York, Philadelphia, Williamsburg, and Charleston.

The character of the American merchant elite of the mid-eighteenth century is immediately revealed in the portraits of John Singleton Copley. His works were of unquestionable quality, even by English norms, and they set the standard for Colonial America. For artists of ambition, like Copley, the career opportunities in America were simply not enough. They yearned for the patronage and galleries of Europe, for the companionship of other like-minded artists, and for the chance to paint works other than portraits. Benjamin West was the first American painter to succeed in establishing himself in London, after spending three years in Italy; in time Charles Willson Peale, Gilbert Stuart, and John Trumbull would all benefit from West's hospitality.

Ironically, political independence at first had the effect of making American art adhere more closely to English models. The war years isolated the country artistically as well as commercially. When peace and prosperity returned, not only was there a pent-up desire for imported goods, there was an entirely new style, the Neoclassical, to assimilate. Still, the regional character of American art did not disappear during this period. America had regarded the events of the French Revolution with horror but began to warm up to its old Revolutionary War ally during Jefferson's presidency. Beginning in the early 1800s, the influence of France on American art rivaled that of England.

Neoclassicism held sway in architecture and the decorative arts until about 1840, but a peculiarly American version of European Romanticism emerged earlier in both painting and literature. Questions about America's national identity—as a land and as a people—were explored in the romances of James Fenimore Cooper, the genre paintings of George Caleb Bingham and William Sidney Mount, the historical tableaux of Emanuel Leutze, and the landscape paintings of the Hudson River School. The great natural features of a vast land became eloquent symbols in a type of painting that appeared intensely true to observed fact but was, in reality, highly idealistic and emotionally charged. This tradition began with Thomas Cole and continued with his followers, Asher B. Durand and Frederic E. Church (a member of the Metropolitan Museum's first board of trustees), who pushed the Hudson River School decisively in the direction of greater detail and greater realism.

(OPPOSITE)

Ralph Earl

1751–1801

ELIJAH BOARDMAN, 1789

Oil on canvas; 83 × 51 in. (210.8 × 129.5 cm)
Bequest of Susan W. Tyler, 1979 (1979.395)

Ralph Earl was one of the foremost American painters of the late 18th century. Elijah Boardman was a prosperous textile merchant who fought in the Revolutionary War and eventually became a United States senator. Earl has provided clues to the background and personality of the sitter by posing him in a room of his dry-goods store at a stand-up desk and bookcase. The horizontal and vertical patterns created by the bolts of cloth and the books enliven the picture. This and other Connecticut portraits represent the finest period of Earl's work, blending a straightforward realism with the polished grace that the artist acquired during his years abroad.

(LEFT)

Detail from the Album Quilt (see page 265)



John Singleton Copley

1738–1815

MRS. JOHN WINTHROP, 1773

Oil on canvas; 35½ × 28¾ in. (90.2 × 73 cm)

Morris K. Jesup Fund, 1931 (31.109)

Copley was America's foremost painter of the 18th century. This portrait, painted just before he left Boston for England, represents Copley at the height of his power and exhibits the intensive realism that was the principal characteristic of his work at that time. Hannah Fayerweather Winthrop was an articulate and intelligent colonist, the wife of America's first prominent astronomer, a professor at Harvard University. Copley has rendered the varying textures of her muslin cap, silk dress, and lace cuffs with remarkable precision; in painting the table surface upon which she rests her hands, he demonstrated a degree of technical competence equaled by few of his contemporaries.

(OPPOSITE)

James Peale

1749–1831

STILL LIFE: BALSAM APPLES AND VEGETABLES, ca. 1820s

Oil on canvas; 20¼ × 26½ in.

(51.4 × 67.3 cm)

Maria DeWitt Jesup Fund, 1939 (39.52)

Although American artists were interested in still life in the 18th century, they did not devote themselves to it until the 19th. James Peale, brother of the more prominent artist Charles Willson Peale, led in developing a Philadelphia school of still life. This masterpiece of the genre presents a lavish, colorful assortment of vegetables pyramidally arranged and carefully balanced without kitchen utensils or other man-made objects. Given the variety of textures and shapes depicted, it must be considered something of a tour de force.

The first of the major pre-Civil War revival styles that so drastically changed the look of the decorative arts was the Gothic Revival, which had appeared first in furniture and was followed by the more exuberant Rococo Revival and the Renaissance Revival styles. The traumatic experience of the Civil War made the relatively simple-minded but usually genuine sentimentalism of so much prewar American art inappropriate. As in the early decades of the nineteenth century, literature and painting first registered the changed attitudes of the post-Civil War period. In painting two major directions may be observed: a detailed and relatively blunt realism, as in Winslow Homer or Thomas Eakins, and a style veering in the direction of refinement and aestheticism, as in Whistler's elegant nocturnes or John Twachtman's austere *Arques-la-Bataille*. By the nation's centennial, American sculptors had cast off lingering Neoclassical influences in favor of a fluid, naturalistic style, best exemplified in the bronzes of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, the premier sculptor of the American Gilded Age.

No clearer revelation of the dilemmas posed by life in post-Civil War America exists than the decision by three of the most talented American artists—James McNeill Whistler, Mary Cassatt, and John Singer Sargent—to pursue their careers abroad as vol-

untary expatriates. In London and Paris they found the sophistication, tolerance, and cultural maturity that America lacked, despite its wealth. In Europe they were also able to escape the instability of an American society increasingly divided between capitalist and laborer, native-born and immigrant, rich and poor, black and white. In the end these dilemmas would force the art of home-based realists such as Eakins and Homer into isolation and introspection. Yet the commitment of the American Impressionists to the portrayal of modern American life reflects the concurrent energy and optimism that America's growing economic and political power evoked.

Since it was established over a century ago, the Metropolitan Museum has been acquiring American art, and its collections are now the most comprehensive and representative to be found anywhere. The American Wing opened in 1924, and for the first time American decorative art was presented in an orderly, chronological way. In 1980 the wing was expanded to include American paintings and sculpture and to give an integrated and coherent representation of America's artistic past.





New York (Orange County), ca. 1767

VERPLANCK ROOM

Purchase, The Sylmaris Collection, Gift of George Coe Graves, by exchange, 1940 (40.127)

Colonial cabinetmakers borrowed from England to create an American version of the Chippendale style, while architects

appropriated the building traditions of the Georgian period. This room displays both styles and demonstrates the relative affluence and luxury Colonial gentry had achieved by the middle of the 18th century. This room was originally the front parlor of a Palladian-style house in Orange County, New York, but it is known as the Verplanck Room because the furnishings came from

the Verplanck residence at 3 Wall Street in Manhattan. Among the furnishings is the only known set of New York Chippendale parlor furniture, which includes the card table, a settee, and the set of six matching chairs. The upholstered pieces are covered with a pumpkin-yellow wool damask that is a reproduction of the original fabric.

Gilbert Stuart

1755–1828

GEORGE WASHINGTON, 1795

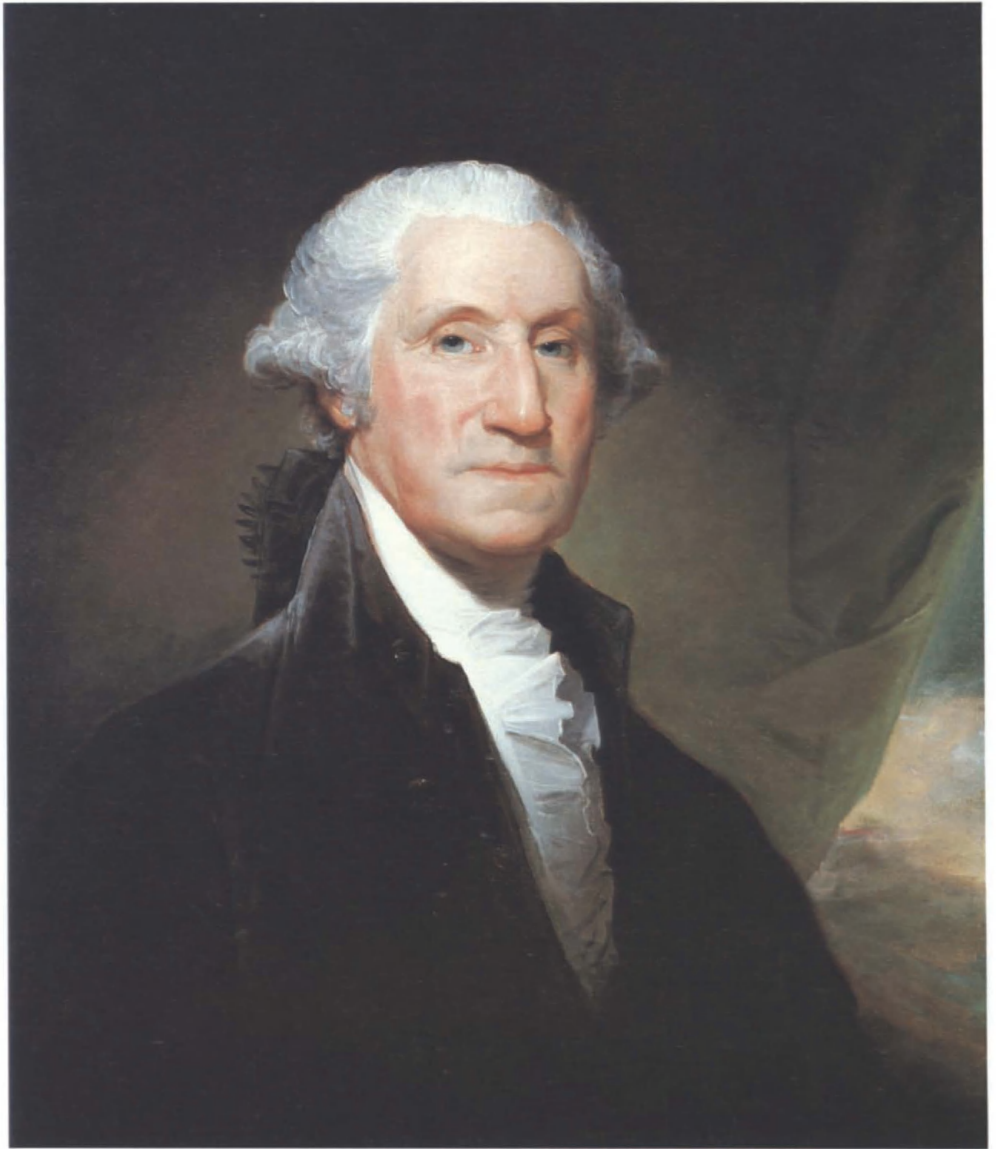
Oil on canvas; 30¼ × 25¼ in.

(76.8 × 64.1 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1907 (07.160)

Gilbert Stuart was a leading painter of his period and earned his livelihood by painting portraits. He enjoyed his first success in London, where he had gone at the beginning of the Revolutionary War in search of sitters; he returned to America in 1793 and painted many prominent people, including the first five American presidents. Even after his exposure to British styles and techniques, he retained the straightforward realism of much of colonial portraiture. His work is characterized by skillful drawing, excellent composition, and a sensitive use of color.

There are 25 portraits by Stuart in the Museum's collection, including 3 of George Washington. He painted the president for the first time in 1795, and the work was greeted with such enthusiasm that at least 32 replicas were ordered, although only 18 are known to exist. The original painting was the basis for the one seen here, which is among the earliest and finest replicas. It has been suggested that the immediacy and vitality of the president's features indicate that it was painted, at least in part, from life. Stuart's work had a strong influence on many American portrait painters of the early 19th century.





Paul Revere, Jr.

1735–1818

TEA EQUIPAGE, ca. 1790–1800

Silver; teapot: H. 6 1/4 in. (15.6 cm)

Bequest of Alphonso T. Clearwater, 1933

(33.120.543–547)

This Federal-style silver for the tea table was made by the famous Boston patriot Paul Revere. The fluted facets of its classical design, the engraved festoons, and ornamented bands are echoed in all of the pieces, including the two sugar bowls, the cream pitcher, and the teapot, which rests on a stand. The son of a Huguenot, Apollos Rivoire (who Americanized his name), Paul Revere, Jr., had many talents and is the best known of Colonial silversmiths. In addition to fashioning and engraving silver objects for numerous patrons, Revere made trade cards, bill heads, and copperplates for paper currency. He also engraved scenic views, portraits, and political prints.

Probably New England, ca. 1845

DISH

Pressed glass; H. 9 1/8 in. 23.2 cm)

Gift of Mrs. Charles W. Green, in memory of Dr. Charles W. Green, 1951 (51.171.160)

The technique of pressing glass, a mechanical method of forming a glass vessel with a relief pattern in one process by using a mold, was introduced in America in the mid-1820s and revolutionized the glass-making industry. Molten glass often contains impurities, but these defects were disguised by elaborate lacy patterns of the molds. This rare, lacy, shell-shaped dish contains motifs culled from Classical, Gothic, and Rococo sources, a tribute to the mold-maker's talent and ingenuity.

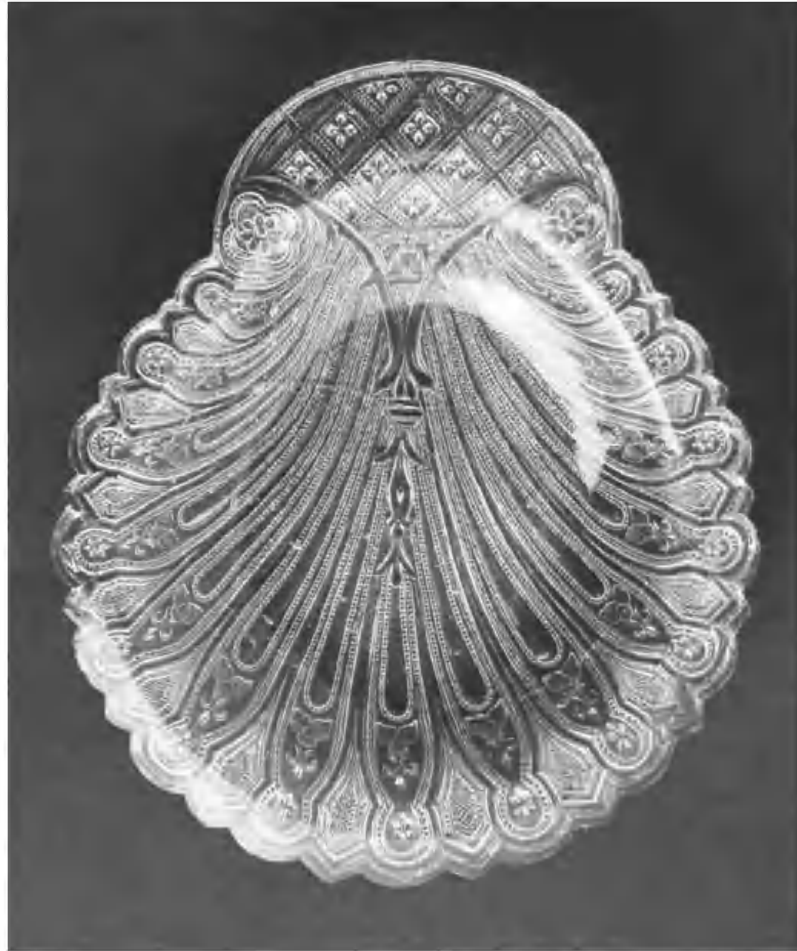
Pennsylvania, ca. 1765–74

POCKET FLASK

Amethyst-colored glass; H. 4 3/4 in. (12.1 cm)

Gift of Frederick W. Hunter, 1914 (14.74.17)

Henry William Stiegel operated the American Flint Glass Manufactory from 1765 to 1774 and was the first successful producer of glass tableware that was the equal of European imports. The diamond-daisy pattern in this amethyst-colored pocket flask was probably made by Stiegel; the pattern was not used by European glassmakers.





Rhode Island (Newport), 1758

EASY CHAIR

Walnut and maple; H. 46 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (117.8 cm)
Gift of Mrs. J. Insley Blair, 1950 (50.228.3)

This is the best documented, the best preserved, and the most beautiful of all American 18th-century easy chairs. The frame is inscribed "Gardner Junr Newport May 1758," and the original upholstery is virtually intact. The front and sides are

worked with a brightly colored diamond or flame stitch that was very popular in the 18th century, while the back is covered with a crewelwork scene that is a masterpiece in its own right. The bucolic landscape shows a shepherd with his flock, deer, birds, trees, and flowers, set among stylized hills (see detail opposite). Easy chairs are now popularly called wing chairs because of the projecting sides that served as headrests or gave protection against drafts or the heat of a fire.





(OPPOSITE)

Thomas Cole

1801–1848

VIEW FROM MOUNT HOLYOKE,
NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS,
AFTER A THUNDERSTORM (THE
OXBOW), 1836

Oil on canvas; 51½ × 76 in. (130.8 × 193 cm)
Gift of Mrs. Russell Sage, 1908 (08.228)

Known as the father of the Hudson River
School of landscape painters, Thomas Cole
holds a prominent place in the history of

American painting, both for the quality of
his own work and for the influence he
exerted over a generation of painters. At
once a realist and a romantic, Cole infused
America's natural scenery with a sense of
sublime grandeur. He was fascinated by the
oxbow formation of the Connecticut River
below Mount Holyoke, Massachusetts, and
produced this magnificent panorama of the
valley just after a thunderstorm. He
depicted himself at work in the foreground
(see the detail opposite).



George Caleb Bingham

1811–1879

**FUR TRADERS DESCENDING THE
MISSOURI, ca. 1845**

Oil on canvas; 29 × 36½ in. (73.7 × 92.7 cm)
Morris K. Jesup Fund, 1933 (33.61)

Bingham was a specialist in subjects drawn from the American countryside, particularly life on the frontier. In this masterpiece of American genre painting, a unique document of river life in the Midwest, he has depicted a moment in the life of a French-Canadian fur trader, one of

the *voyageurs* who combined commerce with exploration and adopted many ways of the wild. Bingham has raised anecdote to the level of poetic drama by setting up a tension between the suspicious stare of the old trader, the unconcerned reverie of his sprawling half-Indian son, and the compact, enigmatic silhouette of a tethered bear cub. Parallel planes recede into the distant background, suggesting that Bingham was familiar with engravings of European paintings, yet the strict formality is softened by an exquisite luminosity.





Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze

1816–1868

WASHINGTON CROSSING THE
DELAWARE, 1851

Oil on canvas; 149 × 255 in.

(378.5 × 647.7 cm)

Gift of John S. Kennedy, 1897 (97.34)

This famous event from the American Revolution was painted by German-born Emanuel Leutze, who spent most of his life in the United States. He painted the first version of this picture (destroyed in World War II) in Düsseldorf, where a school of

Romantic painting flourished, and immediately painted a second version—this picture—which was sent to America and exhibited throughout the country. A print published in 1853 gave the painting the status of a national monument, in spite of numerous errors in historical detail (the flag, for example, as depicted here was not introduced until six months after the event). Nevertheless, the painting captured and has held the affection of succeeding generations of Americans, for the drama of the episode, despite the melodrama, rings true.

Frederic Edwin Church

1826–1900

THE HEART OF THE ANDES, 1859

Oil on canvas; 66½ × 119¼ in.

(168.9 × 302.9 cm)

Bequest of Margaret E. Dows, 1909 (09.95)

Frederic Church was Thomas Cole's star pupil, and as Cole was the major figure in the first generation of the Hudson River School, so Church dominated the second. He did not confine himself to views of New York and New England; in the 1850s, influenced by the great explorer Alexander

von Humboldt, he traveled to South America and made sketches that were the basis of a great Andean panorama. Church painted nature with uncanny fidelity and an abiding sense of awe. His landscapes embodied America's belief that the opening of frontiers and territorial expansion were the nation's destiny. When this monumental painting was first shown to the public in 1859, in a darkened room and illuminated by hidden lights, it caused a sensation. In many ways, the painting carried the ideas of the Hudson River School to their most dramatic culmination.





Thomas Eakins

1844–1916

THE CHAMPION SINGLE SCULLS (MAX SCHMITT IN A SINGLE SCULL)

1871

Oil on canvas; 32½ × 46¼ in.

(82.6 × 117.5 cm)

Purchase, The Alfred N. Punnett

Endowment Fund and George D. Pratt Gift,

1934 (34.92)

Although he never achieved commercial success during his lifetime because of his uncompromising realism and his resistance to prevailing genteel cosmopolitanism, Thomas Eakins was arguably the finest 19th-

century American painter. In this complex, haunting work, the artist's passion for sports is suffused with a lyrical response to subtle qualities of light and to the rhythmic placement of forms in deep space. A keen rower, Eakins produced several boating pictures (he himself is rowing the shell beyond Max Schmitt), but here he has been able to maintain an intellectual distance from the subject, studying the composition with care and concentrating on his draftsmanship. The reflection and refraction of the water demonstrate his precise scientific observation, but here and there are freely painted passages, such as the stone house and leafy shore at the left.





Carleton E. Watkins

1829–1916

VIEW ON THE COLUMBIA—
CASCADES, 1867

Albumen silver print from glass negative;
15¾ × 20⅞ in. (40 × 52.4 cm)

Warner Communications Inc. Purchase Fund
and Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1979
(1979.622)

Consummate photographer of the American western landscape, Carleton Watkins combined a rigorous sense of pictorial structure with a virtuosic technical mastery of the medium. For large-format landscape work, such as Watkins produced

along the Columbia River in Oregon, the physical demands of the photographic process were great; since there was as yet no practical means of enlarging, Watkins's "mammoth" glass negatives had to be as large as he wished the prints to be.

Furthermore, his glass plates had to be coated with photosensitive emulsion, exposed, and developed while the solution remained humid, requiring the photographer to transport a traveling darkroom. So perfectly resolved are these first commanding views of the American West that, despite their early date, they remain unequalled.



John Singer Sargent

1856–1925

MADAME X (MADAME PIERRE
GAUTREAU), 1884

Oil on canvas; 82 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 43 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
(208.6 × 109.9 cm)

Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1916 (16.53)

Mme Gautreau, born Virginia Avegno in New Orleans in 1859 and married to a French banker, became one of Paris's notorious beauties during the 1880s. Sargent was impressed by her charm and theatrical use of makeup, and he determined to paint her. Work was attended by numerous delays and reworkings of the canvas, and when it was shown at the 1884 Paris Salon, it was given a scathing reception. Reviewers were critical of Mme Gautreau's character, the lavender coloring of her skin, and the impropriety of her dress with its revealing décolletage and the slipped strap that bared her right shoulder (later painted over). The portrait lacks the bravura brushwork of many of Sargent's major paintings, partly because of the many reworkings, but the elegant pose and outline of the figure, recalling his debt to Velázquez, make it one of his most striking canvases. When he sold it to the Museum in 1916, Sargent wrote, "I suppose it is the best thing I have done."



Mary Cassatt

1844–1926

LADY AT THE TEA TABLE, 1885

Oil on canvas; 29 × 24 in. (73.7 × 61 cm)

Gift of the artist, 1923 (23.101)

Mary Cassatt of Philadelphia became the only American painter to exhibit her work with the French Impressionists. Domestic scenes, especially those including women and children, were her specialty, and she used the high-key palette characteristic of Impressionism to create pictures of great naturalism and warmth but without cloying sentimentalism. Here she has portrayed her

mother's cousin, Mrs. Robert Moore Riddle, in a painting that was intended to be a thank-you gift for hospitality received in London. The Riddle family found it disconcerting and unattractive, perhaps for its departure from traditional spatial relationships. The foreground and background almost merge, reflecting the artist's debt to Degas, Manet, and Japanese prints, which were of great interest to artists at the time. Although Degas had pronounced it "la distinction même" (distinction itself), the painting languished in storage for 30 years and was eventually donated to the Metropolitan by the artist herself.

Winslow Homer

1836–1910

NORTHEASTER, 1895

Oil on canvas; $34\frac{3}{8} \times 50\frac{1}{4}$ in.

(87.3 × 127.6 cm)

Gift of George A. Hearn, 1910 (10.64.5)

Homer was a man with an immensely perceptive eye and a distinctive vision, and this is one of his masterpieces. The painting captures the essence of the wind-whipped waves and rocky shore along the coast of

Maine, where he spent the last 25 years of his life portraying the constant struggle between man and the turbulent ocean. The composition here is based on a forceful diagonal, and the broad, sweeping brushstrokes enhance the sense of harshness and drama. The fact that the artist painted out two male figures in sou'westers that had originally appeared on the rocks documents his tendency toward distillation, even abstraction, in his late works.



John H. Twachtman

1853–1902

ARQUES-LA-BATAILLE, 1885

Oil on canvas; 60 × 78⁷/₈ in.

(152.4 × 200.3 cm)

Morris K. Jesup Fund, 1968 (68.52)

Most leading American artists of the late 19th century journeyed to Europe to study, usually to France. Twachtman went first to Germany, where he worked at the Munich Royal Academy and adopted the forceful brushstrokes, heavy application of paint, and limited, low-key palette that were associated with the circle of Wilhelm Leisl.

Later, however, after spending a few years back in America, he went to Paris, where he painted this splendid landscape, which pictures a river scene near Dieppe on the Normandy coast, an area popular with the French Impressionists. The subdued colors and calligraphic elements show strong evidence of the influence of James McNeill Whistler and of Japanese prints. Although Twachtman never received true critical acclaim, he was respected by his fellow artists and was a founding member of a group of American Impressionist artists who called themselves “The Ten.”





TAILORED WEDDING ENSEMBLE,
1887

Gray wool and beige passementerie
Gift of Margaret M. Flockhart, 1968
(CI. 68.53.5abd)

Louise Whitfield wore this gray wool traveling costume on April 22, 1887, when she married the great industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. This is an excellent example of the highest quality dressmaking and construction; the fashionable late-Victorian silhouette is complemented by the graceful drapery that flows around and over the ample bustle skirt. The rose-gray passementerie is arranged in a foliate pattern on the plastron and cuffs and as a decorative panel on the skirt.

Baltimore, begun in 1846

ALBUM QUILT

Appliquéd and quilted cotton;
83 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. $\times$ 85 in. (211.8 $\times$ 215.9 cm)
Bequest of Margaret Brown Potvin, 1987
(1988.134)

This beautiful quilt is one of the highlights of the Museum's fine collection of American quilts and coverlets. This is a true album quilt, since almost every block is signed and dated by a different person. Some of the blocks are decorated with motifs typically found only on Baltimore quilts, such as the central eagle and flag, while other designs, such as those that employ the cut-paper technique, can be seen on album quilts from all regions of the country. Although the quilt entered the collection with almost no known history, research has determined that the quilt blocks were given to a woman named Mary Brown Turner by friends and family in celebration of the coming birth of her child. For some reason, she never joined the blocks together, and the daughter in whose honor the blocks were made completed the quilt perhaps 20 years later.





Tiffany Studios, 1902–38

AUTUMN LANDSCAPE, 1923

Stained glass; 11 × 8 ft. 6 in. (33.5 × 25.2 m)

Gift of Robert W. de Forest, 1925 (25.173)

Louis Tiffany (1848–1933), America's leading designer in the Art Nouveau style, gained international renown for his work in glass. The son of Charles L. Tiffany, founder of the well-known jewelry store, he studied landscape painting and then pursued a career in the decorative arts. He experimented with glass as early as the 1870s and achieved an astonishingly wide range of novel and colorful effects, not only with stained-glass window panels and lampshades but also with "favrite" glass, a Tiffany innovation. The Museum first acquired examples of his work in 1896.

Augustus Saint-Gaudens

1848–1907

DIANA, ca. 1894

Gilded bronze; H. (reduction)

28¼ in. (71.8 cm)

Gift of Lincoln Kirstein, 1985 (1985.353)

The only female nude that Saint-Gaudens created, *Diana* was initially designed as a weathervane for the tower of Stanford White's Madison Square Garden, which was completed in 1891. This statuette, a reduction of the over-lifesize original, lacks the flying drapery of the weathervane and is mounted atop a full orb on a two-tiered base. Its graceful lines and silhouette rank the figure among the most elegant in American art and an outstanding image of the American Renaissance. Cast in Paris, *Diana* is enhanced by delicate chasing of the hair and facial features and by a rich matte-gold patination, with which the sculptor was experimenting late in his life.



THE ARTS OF AFRICA, OCEANIA, AND THE AMERICAS





Africa



THE ART OF AFRICA is as old and as complex as any in the world. More than a million and a half years ago, the first human beings to walk erect did so in eastern Africa, and in the half-million years that followed, the population spread to most parts of the continent. Modern humans began to appear about one hundred thousand years ago, and the rude stone tools of their predecessors were gradually replaced by the more refined and efficient examples of the New Stone Age. It was during this period that the first African art appears—rock paintings of people and animals made in Namibia twenty-eight thousand years ago. By the middle of the first millennium B.C. sculptors in northern Nigeria modeled the terracotta figures that are the earliest preserved examples of sub-Saharan African sculpture.

Although the record of African sculpture begins with works of durable terracotta, most African sculpture is made of wood or other organic materials that perish quickly in a tropical climate. For this reason, most extant African wood sculpture is believed to date from only the past century or two. Objects fashioned from more resistant media, such as metal, stone, and terracotta, are therefore especially valuable as records of earlier periods. Fortunately recent archaeological work has revealed a great deal about African art, and modern scholars have also learned much from the writings of the traders, explorers, and missionaries who for the past two thousand years have come to Africa from all over the world.

Africa is so vast and its cultural contexts so varied that it may never be possible to write a single, unified history of African art. Each of the many distinct ethnic groups has a language, religion, history, and way of life all its own, and in each of these societies art plays an important but subtly different role. Most African sculpture comes from the forest and savanna areas south of the Sahara Desert, which can be divided into four broad regions: the Western Sudan and Guinea Coast areas of West Africa and the equatorial forest and southern savanna areas of Central Africa.

Although African artists rarely create art for its own sake, they do apply rigorous aesthetic standards to their work, and they value the prestige that their artistic abilities bring. Knowledge of the contexts for which African art is made is essential to an appreciation of its forms and to an understanding of its meaning.

(OVERLEAF)

Mexican, Olmec, 10th–6th century B.C.

MASK

Jade; H. 6¼ in. (17.1 cm)

Bequest of Alice K. Bache, 1977 (1977.187.33)

In the first millennium B.C., the Olmec peoples used jade and other jadelike stones of green hue for a variety of objects, from personal ornaments to figures and masks of ceremonial and/or mortuary intent. This mask is naturalistic in size, that is, big enough to cover the face, but it is not pierced for either seeing or breathing. It may have been used as part of an elaborate headdress or it could have been the burial mask of an important personage or ruler. Details of the face have a fleshy, almost lifelike quality that belies the hardness of the stone from which they were wrought.

(OPPOSITE)

Mali, Dogon people

SEATED COUPLE

Wood, metal; H. 29 in. (73.7 cm)

Gift of Lester Wunderman, 1977 (1977.394.15)

Dogon couples such as this one are usually identified as primordial ancestors, although specific field documentation is lacking. In this example, a man and a woman sit together on a single, round stool, which is supported by four figures. The man has his arm around the woman, pointing to her breasts, while with his other hand he points to his own genitals. He carries a quiver on his back, while she carries an infant on hers. These iconographic elements allude to the man's role in Dogon society as progenitor and protector, warrior and hunter, and to the woman's role as mother and nurturer. These themes are found in the sculpture of many sub-Saharan African peoples and serve to reinforce cultural stereotypes that enhance the group's social organization.

(LEFT)

Gabon, Fang people, 19th–20th century

JANUS-FACED HELMET MASK

Wood, paint; H. 11¼ in. (29.8 cm)

The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial Collection, Bequest of Nelson A. Rockefeller, 1979 (1979.206.24)



Nigerian (court of Benin), early 16th century
PENDANT MASK

Ivory, iron, and copper; H. 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (23.8 cm)
 The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial
 Collection, Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller,
 1972 (1978.412.323)

A dynasty of divine kingship at Benin, in contemporary Nigeria, can trace its origins back six hundred years. The kings of Benin have historically commissioned works of art that reinforce the rank and stature of members of the court. This finely carved ivory pendant, inlaid with metal, was owned and worn by the king himself on occasions of state. It is believed to be a portrait of Queen Idia, mother of the early-16th-century king Esigie. Esigie considered her one of his most valued counselors and paid tribute to her memory by investing the role of queen mother with an official title and instituting the practice of dedicating commemorative altars in her honor.

In this depiction, Idia's face is framed by a carved openwork flange of two alternating motifs consisting of stylized forms of mudfish and Portuguese sailors, which allude to the spiritual and material nature of the king's power.

Zaire, Kunda clan, Luba and Hemba peoples,
 late 19th century
"BULI MASTER" STOOL

Wood; H. 24 in. (61 cm)
 Purchase, Buckeye Trust and Charles B.
 Benenson Gifts, Rogers Fund, and funds
 from various donors, 1979 (1979.290)

Scholars have isolated a group of stylistically related works of African art and attributed them to an artist of the mid-19th century, Ngongo ya Chintu, from Buli in Zaire. Within a sculptural tradition that emphasizes an idealization of the human form and serenity of expression, the "Buli" style reflects a distinctive artistic vision by communicating pathos and accentuating the ravages of time on the body. Chintu's style was perpetuated by disciples for decades after his time.

Stools of this sort were possessed by chiefs and kings, who were either Luba themselves or emulated Luba sacred rule. No mere functional object, each stool enshrines the soul of its leader. Associated with its owner's reign, it also represents a link with precepts of Luba power and dynastic succession.





Gabon or Congo, Kwele people,
19th–20th century

FACE MASK

Wood and paint; H. 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (52.7 cm)
The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial
Collection, Bequest of Nelson A. Rockefeller,
1979 (1979.206.8)

Kwele masks appeared in ceremonies of the Beete cult. Like the cults of other groups in the western Equatorial Forest region, Beete relied on the power of the skulls of deceased family members to combat the negative forces that threatened to destroy the village with famine, disease, or war. Beete involved making a potent medicine to be consumed by the entire village. While the extensive preparations for this great ceremony were in progress, masks appeared in the village to create the “hot” atmosphere necessary for the medicine to be effective. These masks, representing forest spirits and children, would lead the villagers in dancing, creating a sense of harmony and cooperation that was the goal of Beete. The concave, heart-shaped face at the center of this mask is a feature that links Kwele masks with carving styles of other groups in this region.

Sierra Leone, Mende-, Sherbro-, or Bullom-speaking peoples, 19th–20th century
HELMET MASK

Wood, metal; H. 15 in. (38.1 cm)
Gift of Robert and Nancy Nooter, 1982
(1982.489)

In the culturally diverse region of Sierra Leone, helmet masks are generally associated with men’s and women’s societies known respectively as Poro and Sande. In contrast to the ideals of feminine beauty emphasized in Sande masks, the defining feature of this man’s mask is a beard. Emphasis is on elegant dressing of the head. A central knoblike finial is surrounded by a series of animal horns that rise up from the perimeter and serve as medicinal containers, which associate the work with healing practices. Their placement and orientation, with the tips pointed upward, reinforce Poro ideals of physical strength and power. Another notable feature, the lateral flaps and medallions, is a decorative motif drawn from the costume of male Poro members, medical practitioners, musicians, and dancers. Inspired by a local leatherworking tradition, the design of this mask also reflects influences imported from North Africa a thousand years earlier.





Oceania



THE SKETCHINESS OF OUR knowledge of human history in the Pacific is matched by equivalent gaps in the history of the region's art. Only faint indications of its artistic activity remain. Time and climate have not been kind to wood and barkcloth; only in New Zealand is wood sculpture of well-established antiquity known to have survived. Elsewhere the extant works are in tough materials—stone, shell, pottery—and these probably do not represent the full wealth of the actual traditions. The earliest evidence for art in the Pacific world comes from Australia, and so far works from this continent are the most copious, although their dating is often very difficult to establish.

The natural environment of the Pacific Islands is extraordinarily rich in potential imagery; apart from the overwhelming impact of its landscape, the most casual eye can find a superabundance of life, vegetable and animal, in a teeming variety of grotesque and beautiful forms. The major subject of art everywhere, however, both quantitatively and qualitatively, is the human figure. For people who lived in small groups, in environments that challenged their physical power, and who were frequently under attack from hostile neighbors, this choice was perhaps a way to assert the fragile primacy of humanity. In accordance with this, the figure sculpture of the Pacific is never purely realistic; rather, the body is a medium for the expression of concepts.

There are many correspondences between Pacific Islands styles, but it is their multiplicity and diversity that are delightful and astonishing. The isolation of the smaller islands gave rise to local styles; in the larger areas of Melanesia and New Guinea interplay between groups influenced styles. Echoes of ancestral images abound, a form or a design recurring from one group of islands to the next.

More important to understanding of Pacific art are the area's religions—the fundamental beliefs of the islanders—and the societies these religions molded and supported. The quest for power was universal, and power could be gained through the intervention of the supernatural. The supernatural world itself was neutral; it was as likely to punish as to bless. It could kill, or it could bestow authority and fertility. These beliefs became the grand themes of Pacific Islands art, expressed in images that are not meant to edify, console, or charm.

The arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas are housed in the Michael C. Rockefeller Wing, which was opened in 1982. Objects assembled by the once independent Museum of Primitive Art and by Nelson A. Rockefeller, form the core of the wing's collections, which is named for Mr. Rockefeller's son, who collected many of the Asmat objects from western New Guinea that are now in the Museum.

(OPPOSITE)

VIEW OF THE MELANESIAN GALLERIES

The Michael C. Rockefeller Wing

In the foreground are several slit-gongs from Ambryn Island, Vanuatu. Behind the object at the right is the Museum's impressive collection of memorial poles

(mbis) made by the Asmat people of west New Guinea. These carvings were made especially for ceremonies held when an Asmat village had suffered a certain number of deaths at the hands of an enemy. An Asmat canoe and ceremonial objects can be seen behind the slit-gong heads at the left.

(LEFT)

Detail of Solomon Islands Shield (see page 278)

New Zealand, Maori, probably 18th century
FEATHER BOX (WAKA HUIA or PAPAHO)

Wood; H. 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (44.8 cm)

The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial Collection, Purchase, Nelson A. Rockefeller Gift, 1960 (1978.412.755ab)

This wooden box with a fitted lid was used to store the prized feathers worn on the head by a Maori chief. Because the head of a chief was believed to be sacred, anything touching it could be imbued with his power and sanctity. Feather boxes like this one were carved with elaborate designs incorporating the figures of ancestors and were kept high in the rafters of the house, where they were seen from below.





*Solomon Islands (Santa Isabel Island),
mid-19th century*

SHIELD

Basketry, mother-of-pearl, and paint;
H. 33¼ in. (84.5 cm)

The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial
Collection, Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller,
1972 (1978.412.730)

The art of the Solomon Islands is most frequently seen as carved canoe decoration and architectural ornament, but a few shields—perhaps two dozen—exist that are basketry encrusted with shell pieces forming designs that represent a figure and several faces. All of the shields decorated in this manner seem to have been made in the mid-19th century, probably as ceremonial objects or status symbols for men of high rank.

Torres Strait (Mabuiag Island), 18th century

MASK

Turtle shell, clam shell, wood, feathers,
sennit, resin, paint, and fiber; H. 17½ in.
(44.5 cm)

The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial
Collection, Purchase, Nelson A. Rockefeller
Gift, 1967 (1978.412.1510)

The islanders of the Torres Strait, between New Guinea and Australia, used plates of turtle shell to construct sculptures, a practice found nowhere else in the Pacific. Turtle-shell effigies in these islands were first recorded in 1606 by the Spanish explorer Diego de Prado, testimony to the antiquity of the tradition. Some masks are in human form; others represent fish or reptiles, while still others are a combination of attributes from all three.





Gambier Islands (Mangareva Island),
19th century

MALE FIGURE

Wood; H. 38¾ in. (98.4 cm)

The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial
Collection, Bequest of Nelson A. Rockefeller,
1979 (1979.206.1466)

It is not known which of the numerous deities worshiped in the Gambier Islands is represented by this figure, but the god most often the subject of wood figures was Rogo, sixth son of the mythological first inhabitants of the island of Mangareva. Rogo was the god of peace, agriculture, and hospitality in all of Polynesia. On Mangareva Island he was invoked especially in rites connected with the cultivation of turmeric tubers. Most of the sculpture of this island was destroyed in April 1836 at the instigation of missionaries. Only eight figures survived, six of them naturalistic and two of them highly stylized.

*Solomon Islands (Buka or northern
Bougainville), 19th century*

PADDLE

Wood and paint; L. 67 in. (170.2 cm)

The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial
Collection, Purchase, Nelson A. Rockefeller
Gift, 1966 (1978.412.1491)

The Solomon Islanders were well known for their highly warlike propensities, and headhunting expeditions were frequent. The raiders traveled in huge plank-built war canoes capable of carrying dozens of men. Canoe paddles were regularly decorated in extremely low relief with representations of birds and human-shaped figures called *kokorra*. Although they are ubiquitous in the art of the area, practically nothing is known of significance about the *kokorra*, but it seems likely that they had supernatural importance.





Precolumbian America



THE EARLY CIVILIZATIONS OF the two American continents flourished into greatness between the late second millennium B.C. and the middle of the second millennium A.D. The most successful of these civilizations were those of Mesoamerica—the area composed primarily of modern-day Mexico and Guatemala—and the South American region of Peru. It is here that the first great American art was made, in Mesoamerica by the Olmec peoples and in Peru by the peoples of Chavin.

The Aztecs and the Incas were to dominate these respective lands many centuries later, ruling them in the early sixteenth century when Europeans began the invasion of the Americas. The conquerors were the first to see the art of ancient America, an art referred to today as Precolumbian (literally, “before Columbus”). It produced awe and astonishment among them, and in Europe, where many precious objects were sent, it intrigued kings and popes and inspired curiosity among the learned. By the end of the sixteenth century, however, interest in the Indian kingdoms of the Western Hemisphere had waned, and it was not until the nineteenth century that it was rekindled.

The peoples of Precolumbian America were many and varied, and their art was equally multifaceted. It was made to serve a wide variety of functions in materials that range from the precious to the humble, in shapes of tradition and invention, and in dimensions that are monumental or the size of a thumbnail. Today these differences and diversities are a challenge to the modern viewer, as heretofore little-known peoples, places, histories, beliefs, and objects are accessible to those who are interested, and to pursue them is to be rewarded with revelations of a new world.

Many common aesthetic features of Mesoamerican civilizations originated in about 1000 B.C. among the Olmecs, a politically powerful and artistically gifted people who lived in the coastal swamps of the Gulf of Mexico. They formalized concepts upon which significant achievements in Mesoamerican art and architecture were made, achievements substantially elaborated by all later peoples. In Peru the clear antecedents to the region’s artistic accomplishments were present on the north-central Pacific coast by the late second millennium B.C. A significant development of this time was the beginning of metallurgy, when gold was first worked in Peru. American gold objects would be, two millennia later, major factors in attracting Europeans across the Atlantic.

Innumerable American civilizations and peoples existed other than those of Mexico and Peru. The Taino peoples of the islands of the Greater Antilles, for instance, produced works of art of distinctive imagery, and areas of Costa Rica, Panama, and Colombia are known for the production of elaborately worked gold objects.

(OPPOSITE)

Peruvian (Tembladera), 5th–4th century B.C.

BOTTLE

Ceramic, paint; H. 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (31.4 cm)

The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial Collection, Purchase, Nelson A. Rockefeller Gift, 1967 (1978.412.203)

The Cupisnique-Chavin era in Peru, dating from the middle centuries of the second millennium B.C. and partially named for a temple complex near Chavin de Huantar, was one of the most artistically and intellectually inventive in the history of ancient South America. Many extant Cupisnique-Chavin objects come from tombs in the coastal valleys of Chicama, Moche, and Jequetepeque. Cupisnique ceramic vessels—fired to mute tones of gray, black, and tan—are sculptural in form and have pleasingly finished surfaces, some highly polished, others painted with dusty, matte-textured paints. Cupisnique-Chavin iconography is extremely complex, and considerable emphasis is placed on feline forms, probably a reference to the jaguar, the most impressive wildcat of the Americas. An incised and modeled feline head in profile can be seen on this tall, well-preserved bottle.

(LEFT)

Colombian or Ecuadorian (Capulí),

7th–12th century

PENDANT

Gold; H. 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (14.6 cm)

Bequest of Alice K. Bache, 1977 (1977.187.21)

There is a great deal of stylistic variety among the Precolumbian gold objects of the Andes, reflecting the diversity of ancient cultural traditions. This piece, from a plateau that extends from southern Colombia into Ecuador, shows components of the styles from each area, especially the Colombian tendency toward abstraction. Human and animal shapes have been completely eliminated, and what remains is a pendant that is line itself and looks like the work of some ancient calligrapher.



Mexican or Guatemalan, Maya, 8th century
VESSEL WITH MYTHOLOGICAL
SCENE

Ceramic; H. 5½ in. (14 cm)
The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial
Collection, Purchase, Nelson A. Rockefeller
Gift, 1968 (1978.412.206)

During the eighth century the ancient Maya made many straight-sided ceramic vessels painted with elaborate, multifigured scenes. Many were mythological in content,

depicting events that took place in the underworld, the realm of the Lords of Death. The underworld scene painted on this vessel shows a lively dancing figure holding a long-handled ax behind him in his right hand and a raised handstone in his left. While this scene has been interpreted as one of sacrifice, another interpretation holds that it is one of celebration.

Mexican or Guatemalan, Maya, 6th century
SEATED FIGURE

Wood; H. 14 in. (35.6 cm)
The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial
Collection, Bequest of Nelson A. Rockefeller,
1979 (1979.206.1063)

Time, insects, and moisture have destroyed most Precolumbian sculpture in wood, but a handful of such objects have miraculously survived. This wood figure probably owes its existence to the sturdy dry walls of a chamber, perhaps a tomb, where it was placed in ancient times and where it was protected from the tropical environment. Seated and richly dressed, the figure was carved sometime in the sixth century by a master Maya carver.

The noble bearing of the figure clearly bespeaks a personage of importance. He sits with his legs and feet tucked under him and wears a fringed kilt, or hip cloth, tied in place by a fancy belt knotted at the waist in front. Suspended from his neck is a carefully detailed mask, which is supported in front by the figure's joined hands.



Colombian (Tairona), 10th–16th century

MASKED-FIGURE PENDANT

Gold alloy; H. 5¼ in. (13.3 cm)

Jan Mitchell and Sons Collection,

Gift of Jan Mitchell, 1991

(1991.419.31)

This impressive pendant is of the type known as *caciques* in Colombia. Meaning “chieftain,” the word has been applied to the elaborate pendants as a mark of respect. *Caciques* pendants always have huge headdresses, and this example has a large bat mask with a prominent muzzle. It stands with its hands on its hips and holds double-spiral objects in its hands. The object was cast in a gold-copper alloy, called tumbaga, by the lost-wax technique.



Mexican, Aztec,

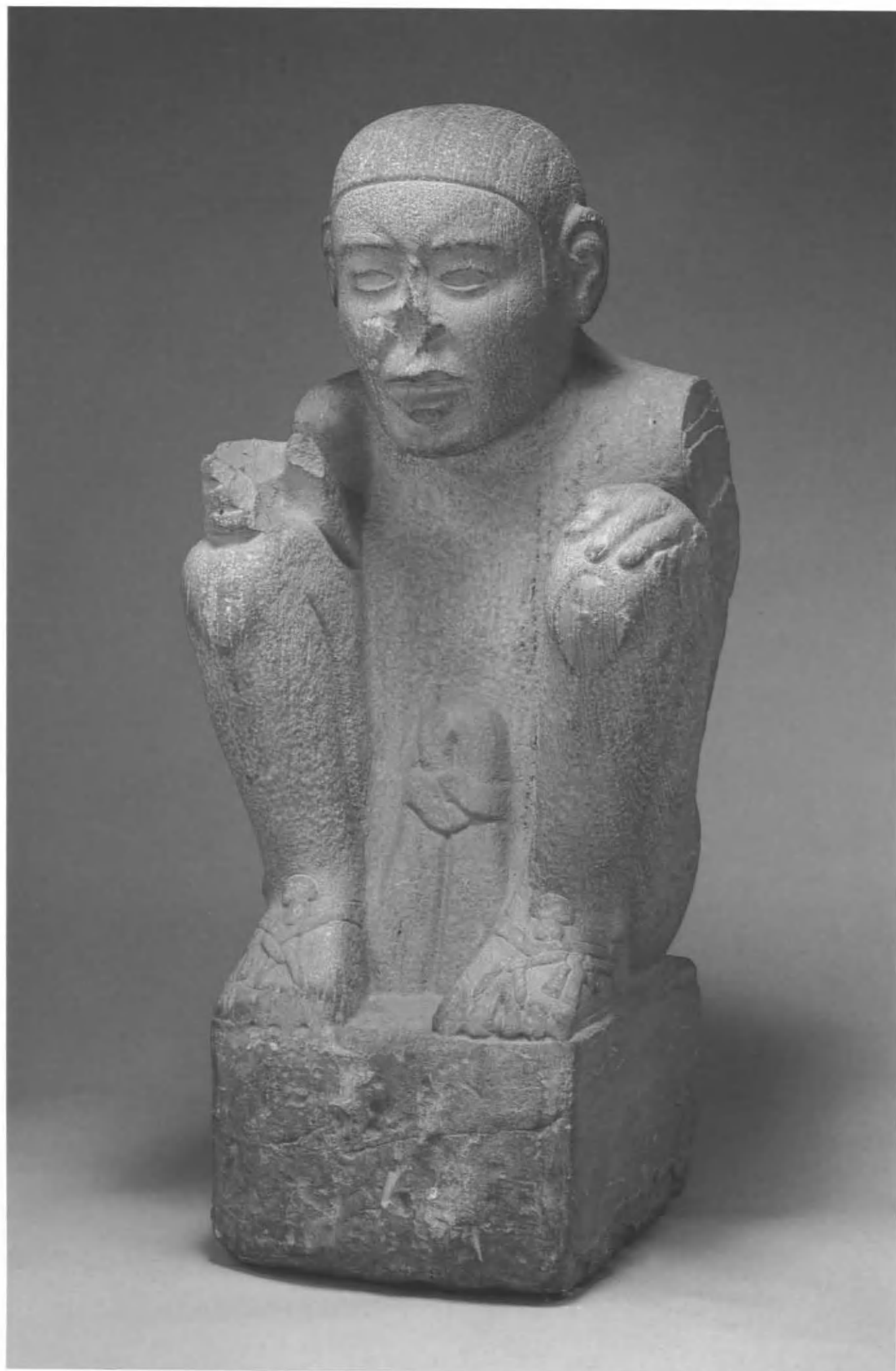
second half of 15th–early 16th century

AZTEC STANDARD BEARER

Laminated sandstone; H. 25 in. (63.5 cm)

Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1962 (62.47)

Aztec temple-pyramids were the last in a sequence of similar structures that were built in Mesoamerica over a period of about 2,000 years. The pyramidal platforms on which the temples sat changed configuration over the centuries, and during Aztec times they became mighty twin pyramids, or “towers,” as the Spaniards called them. Wide flights of stairs led from the plaza floors to the high platforms that supported the temple buildings and large incense burners and/or figures of standard bearers. This standard bearer comes from Castillo de Teayo, an Aztec enclave in northern Veracruz, and it combines cosmopolitan Aztec stylistic features with the use of sandstone, a local Veracruz material.



THE TWENTIETH CENTURY







THE EARLY DECADES OF the twentieth century witnessed the rise and fall of numerous schools of art—Fauvism, Cubism, Surrealism, and others. The history of modern art in both Europe and America is, however, most eloquently written in the works of individual artists whose technical, intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic innovations speak of and for their times.

Since its founding in 1870 the Metropolitan Museum has been concerned with the art of its own time as well as that of the past. This involvement with contemporary art was strengthened early in the twentieth century with the establishment of two funds by the trustee George A. Hearn for the purpose of acquiring paintings by living American artists.

Masterpieces by Renoir and Cézanne were purchased as early as 1907 and 1913, and the recent acquisition of several important collections of European Modernism has immeasurably enriched the Museum's holdings in this area.

Avant-garde modernism in American painting began when a handful of artists—most of them associated with the photographer Alfred Stieglitz and his Gallery 291—started to emulate advanced Parisian art of the early 1900s. In 1913 the Armory Show presented an exhaustive survey of works by Futurists, Dadaists, and Cubists. Assembled for the first time in America, these works outraged critics but astounded artists. Following the outbreak of World War I, many important European modernists arrived in America, but by the time of the Great Depression, a strong American reaction to modernism had emerged in realist art, emphasizing what artists saw as truly and typically American.

In the 1930s and early 1940s it seemed that American native realism would dominate painting indefinitely, but events proved otherwise. Interest in modernism had not died but had simply gone underground. In 1936 a group of artists formed the American Abstract Artists, which contributed to the emergence of Abstract Expressionism in the 1940s. Also of major importance was the arrival of a wave of European masters seeking to escape World War II.

The selection of works in this chapter suggests that by the middle of the twentieth century national distinctions in art had ceased to have much meaning. Willem de Kooning, born in Rotterdam, was twenty-two years old in 1926 when he arrived in Hoboken, New Jersey. Pablo Picasso, a Spaniard, lived and worked most of his life in France. Balthus, born in Paris of Silesian parents, was raised in Berlin and Geneva, worked in France and Italy, and now resides in Switzerland.

When the Lila Acheson Wallace Wing for 20th Century Art opened in 1987, the Museum's collection of modern design was given a permanent exhibition space, along with paintings and sculpture of Europe and America. For the first time, the extent and richness of the Museum's modern-design holdings—perhaps the most comprehensive collection in the western hemisphere—were apparent to the public. As with modern American painting, the Museum began to acquire fine objects soon after they were made, a tradition that continues today on an international scale.

(OVERLEAF)

David Smith

American, 1906–1965

BECCA, 1965

Stainless steel; H. 113¼ in. (287.7 cm)

Bequest of Miss Adelaide Milton de Groot (1876–1967), by exchange, 1972 (1972.127)

David Smith was unquestionably one of the most influential and innovative American sculptors of the 20th century. This fine example of his late work, named for one of his two daughters, is two-dimensional in orientation, intended to be seen from the front. The diagonal elements at the top give the piece a joyous lift, and the burnished scribbles—resembling brushstrokes—over the entire work are both expressive and playful. The artist has been able to maintain the stamp of his individual identity, in spite of his use of modern industrial materials.

(OPPOSITE)

Pablo Picasso

Spanish, 1881–1973

GERTRUDE STEIN, 1906

Oil on canvas; 39½ × 32 in. (100 × 81.3 cm)

Bequest of Gertrude Stein, 1946 (47.106)

The American writer Gertrude Stein was one of Picasso's earliest patrons, and he began working on this portrait of her when he was 24 years old. She posed for him on some 90 occasions, but he had great difficulty with the head. After a trip to Spain in the fall of 1906, nearly a year after he started the portrait, he painted in a new head. The masklike face with its heavy-lidded eyes reflects Picasso's recent encounter with Iberian sculpture. It is said that in response to the observation that Stein, who was then 32 years old, bore little resemblance to the portrait, Picasso replied simply, "She will."

(LEFT)

Pablo Picasso

Spanish, 1881–1973

THE FARMER'S WIFE, 1908

Charcoal on paper, 24¾ × 19 in.

(62.9 × 48.3 cm)

Purchase, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Nate B. Spingold and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, by exchange, and Van Day Truex Fund, 1984 (1984.5.1)



Henri Rousseau ("Le Douanier")

French, 1844–1910

THE REPAST OF THE LION, ca. 1907

Oil on canvas; 44¾ × 63 in. (113.7 × 160 cm)

Bequest of Sam A. Lewisohn, 1951 (51.112.5)

Rousseau was a self-taught artist whose first exhibition was held in Paris in 1886, when he was 42. Both Picasso and Gertrude Stein were among his early admirers. Rousseau began to paint imaginary scenes set in the jungle by 1891; this picture showing a lion devouring a jaguar was probably first

exhibited at the Salon d'Automne in 1907.

The artist's unique vision, his intuitive sense of design and color, and his precise, profuse use of detail combine to render this mysterious, exotic world authentic. The vegetation is evidently inspired by his visits to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, but he has disregarded their actual sizes in inventing forests that dwarf the figures of natives and animals. His animals are based on photographs in a children's book owned by his daughter.

Henri Matisse

French, 1869–1954

NASTURTIIUMS WITH “DANCE,” 1912

Oil on canvas; 75½ × 45⅝ in.

(191.8 × 115.3 cm)

Bequest of Scofield Thayer, 1982 (1984.433.16)

This painting is Matisse's second version of the subject (the first is in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow). It was exhibited at the 1913 Armory Show in New York, Chicago, and Boston, one of the first Matisses to be viewed by a large American audience. The composition, a view of Matisse's studio in Issy-les-Moulineaux, southwest of Paris, was painted in 1912, when the artist returned to France after a long stay in Morocco. In the left foreground is a wooden armchair with a striped cushion; behind it and to the right is a tripod table, intended for sculpture but supporting a vase of nasturtiums. Occupying the entire background is a section of Matisse's large painting *Dance I* of 1909 (now in the Museum of Modern Art, New York), which was standing on the studio floor at the time. Matisse repeated this device of incorporating his own works in his compositions many times. This version of *Nasturtiums with “Dance”* is freer than the first; the tones are paler but more luminous and the varied colors are masterfully combined, proving Matisse's status as one of the greatest colorists of all time. When asked by John Rewald why he painted a second version, Matisse answered, “Because such a thing is quite natural. The conception is not the same. Here I was carried away by color.”





Roger de La Fresnaye

French, 1885–1925

ARTILLERY, 1911

Oil on canvas, 51¼ × 62¾ in.

(130.2 × 159.4 cm)

Gift of Florene M. Schoenborn, 1991 (1991.397)

La Fresnaye could often have observed such military reviews near Les Invalides, in Paris. Here, artillery officers on horseback accompany an ammunition wagon carrying sliders and pulling a field gun. Holding a tricolor aloft, a band in red and blue infantry uniforms marches in the background. Considered the artist's masterpiece, *Artillery* evokes patriotic fervor, motion, and sound. Painting it during the year he became associated with Cubism, La

Fresnaye reduced all forms to their geometric core and aligned them along a rigorous diagonal axis. Completed three years before the outbreak of World War I, the picture also appears prophetic.

Marsden Hartley

American, 1877–1943

PORTRAIT OF A GERMAN OFFICER, 1914

Oil on canvas; 68¼ × 41¾ in.

(173.4 × 105.1 cm)

Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949 (49.70.42)

Hartley painted his best work during the first years of World War I while living in Berlin, a time when the city was filled with

avant-garde artists from all over the world. During this period he produced a series of portraits of German officers, intensely powerful canvases that reflect not only his revulsion at the horrors of the war but also his fascination with the energy and pageantry that accompanied the war's devastation. This painting shows Hartley's assimilation of both Cubism and German Expressionism. The artist denied that the objects in the painting have any special meaning, but the banners, medals, and insignia evoke a collective psychological and physical portrait of the officer. There are also specific references to Hartley's close friend Karl von Freyburg, a young cavalry officer who had recently been killed in action.



Jacques Villon

French, 1875–1963

THE DINING TABLE, 1912

Oil on canvas, 25¼ × 32 in. (65.4 × 81.3 cm)
Purchase, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Justin K.
Thannhauser, by exchange, 1983 (1983.169.1)

Cubism was the stylistic invention of two artists, Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso. Almost contemporaneously it was assimilated by other painters in Paris.

Jacques Villon's painting represents a still life arranged on a table, a subject favored by Braque and Picasso. Villon's interpretation, similarly analytical, is designed in a freer and more lyric mode. *The Dining Table* is a summation of Villon's experiments in depicting form and space. The architectural details of the interior scene are generalized, and the pictorial space is shallow and intimate. The table and the objects on it are diagonally thrust to the front of the picture

plane in a treatment very unlike the frontal perspective of Picasso's and Braque's still lifes. Villon uses overlapping, transparent geometric planes of light and dark tones to denote space. The volumetric forms of the objects are defined by a network of black lines that meander over the faceted planes. The artist has animated the characteristically sober Cubist palette with blue, green, white, and touches of yellow.



Georges Braque

French, 1882–1963

THE GUÉRIDON, 1921–22

Oil and sand on canvas; 75 × 27¾ in.

(190.5 × 70.5 cm)

Gift of Louise Reinhardt Smith, in honor of William S. Lieberman, 1979 (1979.481)

The years around 1920 constituted a transitional period in the career of Braque, who, with Picasso, had helped develop Cubism in the second decade of the century. Braque had resumed painting after serving in the army during World War I. His work began to show the reemergence of naturalistic elements, while retaining many of the formal innovations of Cubism. This still-life composition, *The Guéridon* (The Small Round Table) is typical of the period. Braque has retained the Cubist palette of greens, beiges, and whites and adds a prominent use of black. The pictorial space is compressed to the front of the picture plane, and the tabletop is tilted to display the arrangement of fruits, pipes, newspapers, and musical instruments. The fragmented geometric forms and flat patterned shapes are related to the collage technique first explored by Braque and Picasso some ten years earlier. Braque made at least 15 paintings of this subject between 1921 and 1930. This painting is probably the earliest of the series and was exhibited at the Salon d'Automne in November 1922.





Wassily Kandinsky

Russian, 1866–1944

THE GARDEN OF LOVE (IMPROVISATION NUMBER 27), 1912

Oil on canvas; 47 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 55 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (120.3 × 140.3 cm)
Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949 (49.70.1)

The first abstract pictures were painted shortly after 1910 by Wassily Kandinsky, a Russian who had moved in 1896 to Munich, and Frantisek Kupka, a Czech living in France. Both artists, working independently, evolved a new pictorial language, spiritual in intent, emotional in expression, and abstract in effect. The

specific source for the imagery in *The Garden of Love* is most likely the biblical story of Paradise and the Garden of Eden. Several animals, figures, and landscape motifs are placed around a large, yellow sun. The landscape setting is more generalized and broadly painted than the narrative elements, reflecting Kandinsky's mastery of watercolor technique, which he has successfully adapted here to oil painting. The idyllic scene is not without a threatening tone, as indicated by the presence of ominous black spots of paint and the slithering snake at center right.

Paul Klee

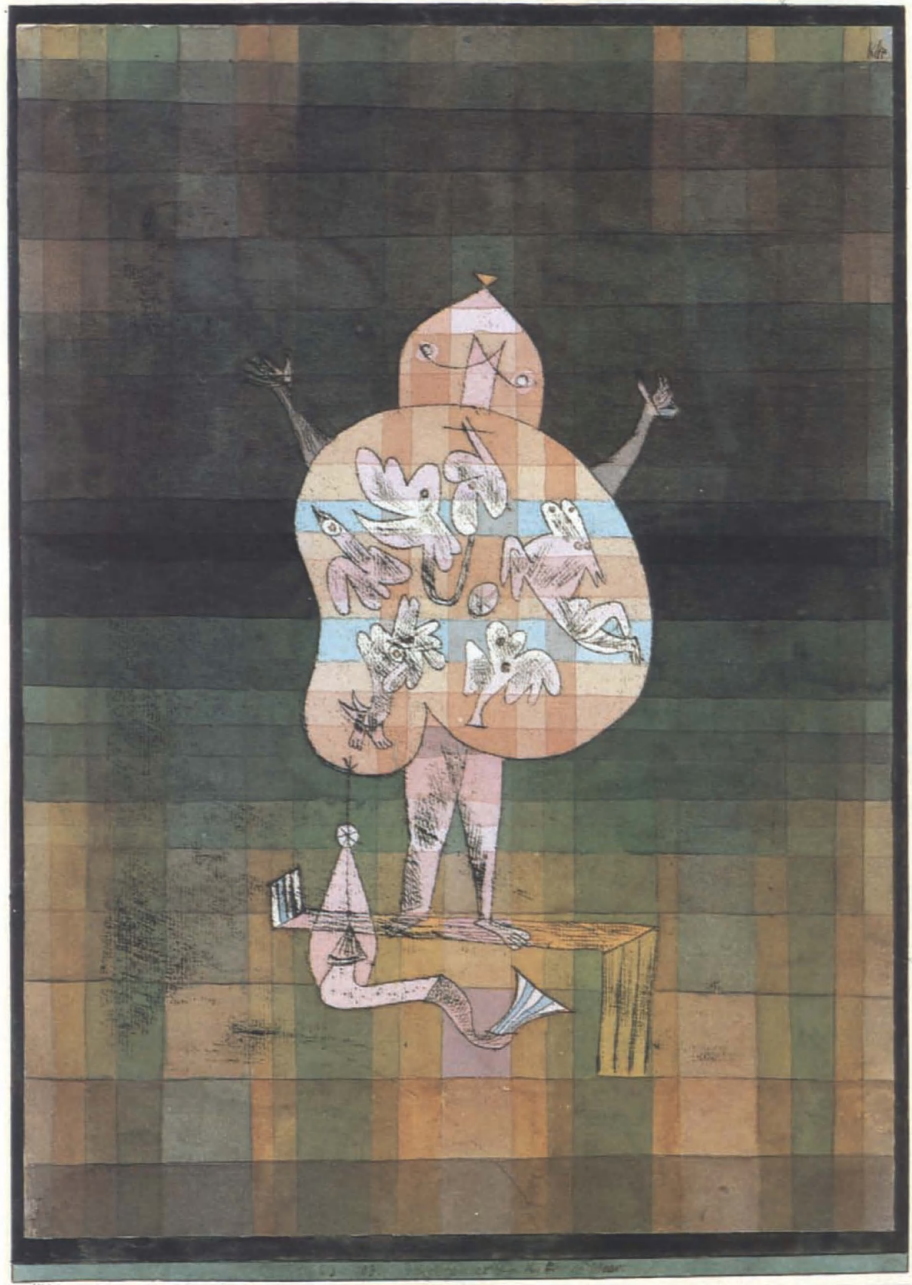
German, 1879–1940

VENTRILOQUIST AND CRIER IN THE MOOR, 1923

Watercolor and transferred printing ink
on paper, bordered with ink; 15¼ × 11 in.
(38.7 × 27.9 cm)

The Berggruen Klee Collection, 1984
(1984.315.35)

This work, with its humor and grotesque fantasy, may strike many viewers as the quintessential Klee. Imaginary beasts float within a transparent ventriloquist who appears to be all belly—except, of course, for a pair of legs, tiny arms, and a sort of head without a mouth. The little creatures inside the ventriloquist may symbolize the odd noises and voices that seem to come from there. Yet why he stands on a small gangplank in a swamp and cries is anyone's guess. The swamp is indicated by the background grid of warm earth colors that turns dark toward the center and against which the figure, as part of this grid, stands out like a light-colored bubble in clear reds and blues. As if attracted by the animal sounds above him, a stray fish is about to enter a net dangling from the lower part of the ventriloquist's anatomy—perhaps to join the menagerie within.





Edward Hopper

American, 1882–1967

THE LIGHTHOUSE AT TWO LIGHTS,
1929

Oil on canvas; 29½ × 43¼ in.

(74.9 × 109.9 cm)

Hugo Kastor Fund, 1962 (62.95)

Hopper, a painter notable for the integrity and logic of his style and attitude, was a general force in American art for 40 years. His essential subject, the recording of the moods of American life through a personal outlook, led to paintings that have remained astonishingly timeless in feeling. “My aim

in painting,” Hopper wrote in 1933, “has always been the most exact transcription of my most intimate impressions of nature.” *The Lighthouse at Two Lights* continues the American tradition of objective painting—the matter-of-factness of Homer and Eakins—in the broader terms of contemporary art. Light and its definition of scene and mood predominate in a Hopper painting, and here mass is defined by walls of light and shadow. The building’s isolation on the promontory reflects the curiously American theme of detachment and loneliness, which runs through all of Hopper’s works.



Charles Sheeler

Americana, 1883–1965

AMERICANA, 1931

Oil on canvas, 48 × 36 in. (121.9 × 91.4 cm)

Edith and Milton Lowenthal Collection,
Bequest of Edith Abrahamson Lowenthal,
1991 (1992.24.8)

Like some of his contemporaries, Sheeler strove for a marriage between Modernist techniques and formal concepts to convey

an American spirit. *Americana* is one of seven paintings executed between 1927 and 1931 of the interior of Sheeler's house in South Salem, New York. Here, the furnishings create a balanced composition of rectangles offset by curvilinear elements. Certainly Cubism influenced the artist's approach, but more importantly, his choice of objects reflects the 1930s interest in American folk art, evidenced by the rugs flanking a Shaker table and benches.

Pierre Bonnard

French, 1867–1947

THE TERRACE AT VERNON, 1939

Oil on canvas, 58¼ × 76¾ in.

(148 × 194.9 cm)

Gift of Mrs. Frank Jay Gould, 1968 (68.1)

As a young artist Bonnard came under the influence of Gauguin's ideas about representing things symbolically in strong patterns and color, and as a result much of his work treads the line between realism and abstraction. In this painting of his house in the Seine Valley, for example, we read the

tree trunk that defines the foreground as a beautiful violet stripe as well as a tree, and the foliage and landscape in the background merge into a tapestry of color. The painting includes many articles of a comfortable bourgeois life: fruit, wine, guests, even good weather. Yet Bonnard has extracted mystery and nuance from this everyday scene. The gaze of the central figure is rather enigmatic, as is the gesture of the woman on the right. The major figures concentrate on their inner world rather than on their companions or the tasks in which they themselves are engaged.





Balthus

French, born 1908

THE MOUNTAIN, 1937

Oil on canvas; 98 × 144 in.

(248.9 × 365.8 cm)

Purchase, Gifts of Mr. and Mrs. Nate B. Spingold and Nathan Cummings, Rogers Fund and The Alfred N. Punnett Endowment Fund, by exchange, and Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1982
(1982.530)

The Mountain was completed in 1937, three years after Balthus had his first one-man exhibition at the age of 26. The ambition

and accomplishment of this composition demonstrate his precocity. His strong simplified forms show the influence of Piero della Francesca and Georges Seurat, and the cultivated awkwardness of his figures indicates his debt to Gustave Courbet. The masterpiece of Balthus's early period, *The Mountain*, representing summer, is the only completed painting in a projected cycle of the seasons. The scene takes place on an imaginary plateau near the top of the Niederhorn in the Bernese Oberland, a landscape Balthus had known since childhood.



Clyfford Still

American, 1904–1980

1947–48—W NO. 1, 1947–48

Oil on canvas; 91¼ × 70¾ in. (233 × 179.7 cm)

Gift of Mrs. Clyfford Still, 1986 (1986.441.3)

Still, another major figure in the New York School, developed his style in the late 1940s on the West Coast. This is an early example of the color-field abstractions for which he is known. All vestiges of traditional composition have been banished and the viewer is denied entry into deep space in this emphatically frontal work.

Willem de Kooning

American (born The Netherlands), 1904

ATTIC, 1949

Oil, enamel, and newspaper transfer on canvas; 61⅞ × 81 in. (157.2 × 205.7 cm)

The MURIEL KALLIS STEINBERG NEWMAN

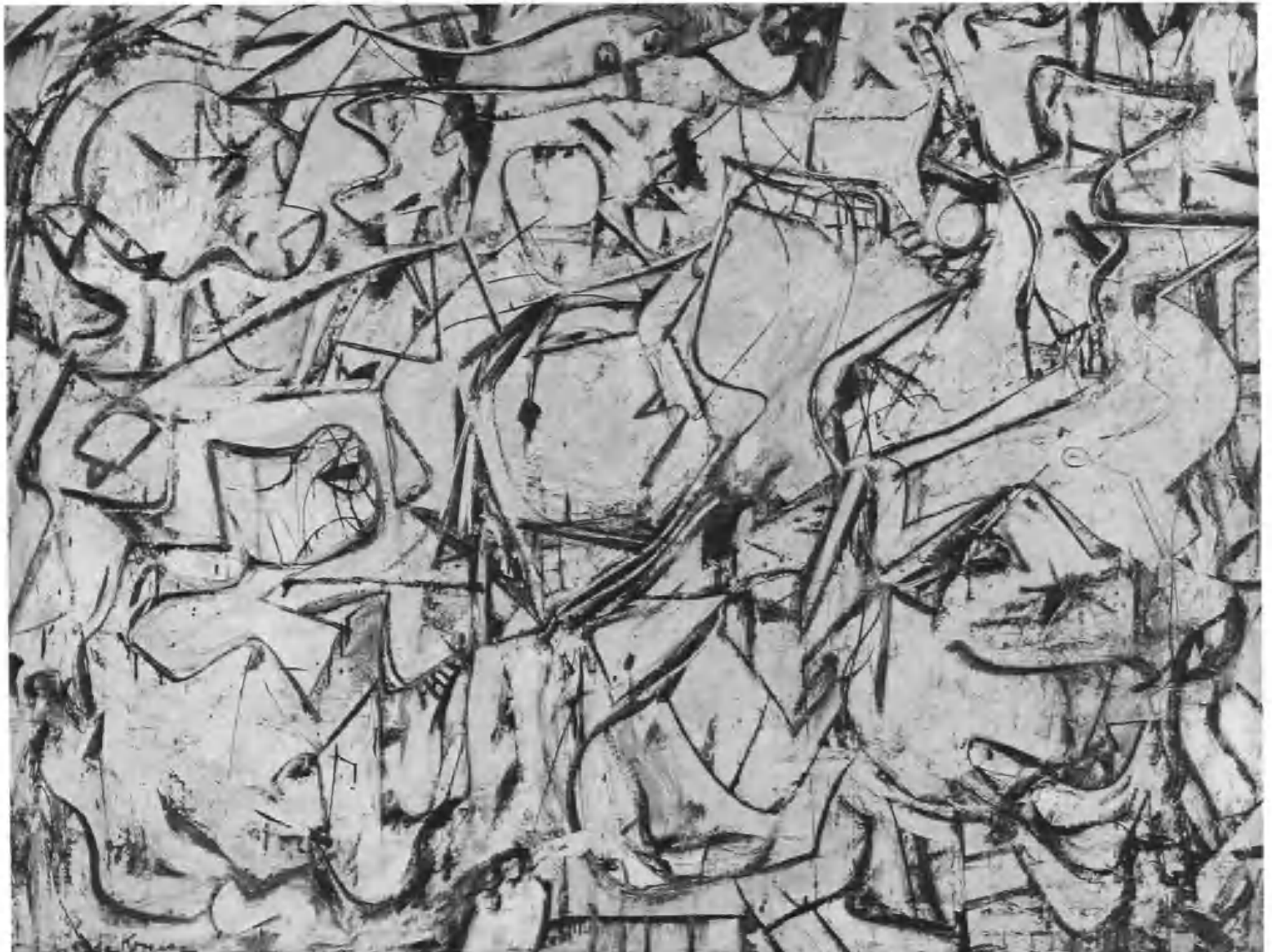
Collection, Jointly owned by The

Metropolitan Museum of Art and Muriel

Kallis Newman, in honor of her son, Glenn

David Steinberg, 1982 (1982.16.3)

This energetic painting was made during a period when de Kooning, one of the leading gestural Abstract Expressionists, eliminated color from his work. Constant revisions and overpainting are evident here; the artist put newspaper over the wet surface to help the paint dry more quickly and this left traces of newspaper transfer. The angular, thrusting forms collide with curvilinear shapes to produce a high-pitched, expressive picture.



Jackson Pollock

American, 1912–1956

AUTUMN RHYTHM (NUMBER 30),
1950

Oil on canvas; 105 × 207 in.

(266.7 × 525.8 cm)

George A. Hearn Fund, 1957 (57.92)

Pollock, a leading Abstract Expressionist and member of the New York School, is best known for his “drip” paintings, which continue to evoke strong reactions more than 40 years after the first one was painted. Along with his colleagues Willem de Kooning, Barnett Newman, and Mark Rothko, Pollock rejected the subjects and techniques of traditional easel painting as insufficient to express the truths he needed to convey in his art. In his early work, Pollock sought truth in the archaic myths of many cultures, evident in such titles as *Pasiphaë*, *Guardians of the Secret*, and *Totem Lesson*. As he sought new subject matter, Pollock was also working toward a new technique, one that would be as direct and fundamental as the content he wished to express. By the late 1940s Pollock had rejected representation and specific subject matter, concentrating on the process of painting itself. *Autumn Rhythm* is a prime example of this new painting.





Ellsworth Kelly

American, born 1923

BLUE GREEN RED, 1962–63

Oil on canvas; 91 × 82 in. (231.1 × 208.3 cm)

Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1963 (63.73)

Kelly spent the years 1948–54 working in Paris, crucial years for the Abstract Expressionists in New York, and his work has a greater affinity with that of Matisse and Arp than with that of his American compatriots. Hard-edged, flat, and without

a trace of the artist's hand, Kelly's imagery nonetheless derives from nature. Here he has juxtaposed three bold colors in a highly skillful and effective manner to create a complex picture in which color and shape are one. The edges of one shape, the rectangle, are identified with the edges of the canvas, while the ellipse expands beyond the canvas, forcing us to finish it in our minds. When one views the shapes as foreground and background, the sources in nature for Kelly's forms are suggested. Blue

and green are the colors of water and earth—perhaps lake and field, indicated not only by hue but also by the swelling, fluid shape of the ellipse and the flatness of the green surrounding it. While the painting itself is continuous with the European biomorphic tradition, its scale is that of the huge close-ups of billboards and movie screens. The outlook is contemporary, the impact American.



Barnett Newman

American, 1905–1970

SHIMMER BRIGHT, 1968

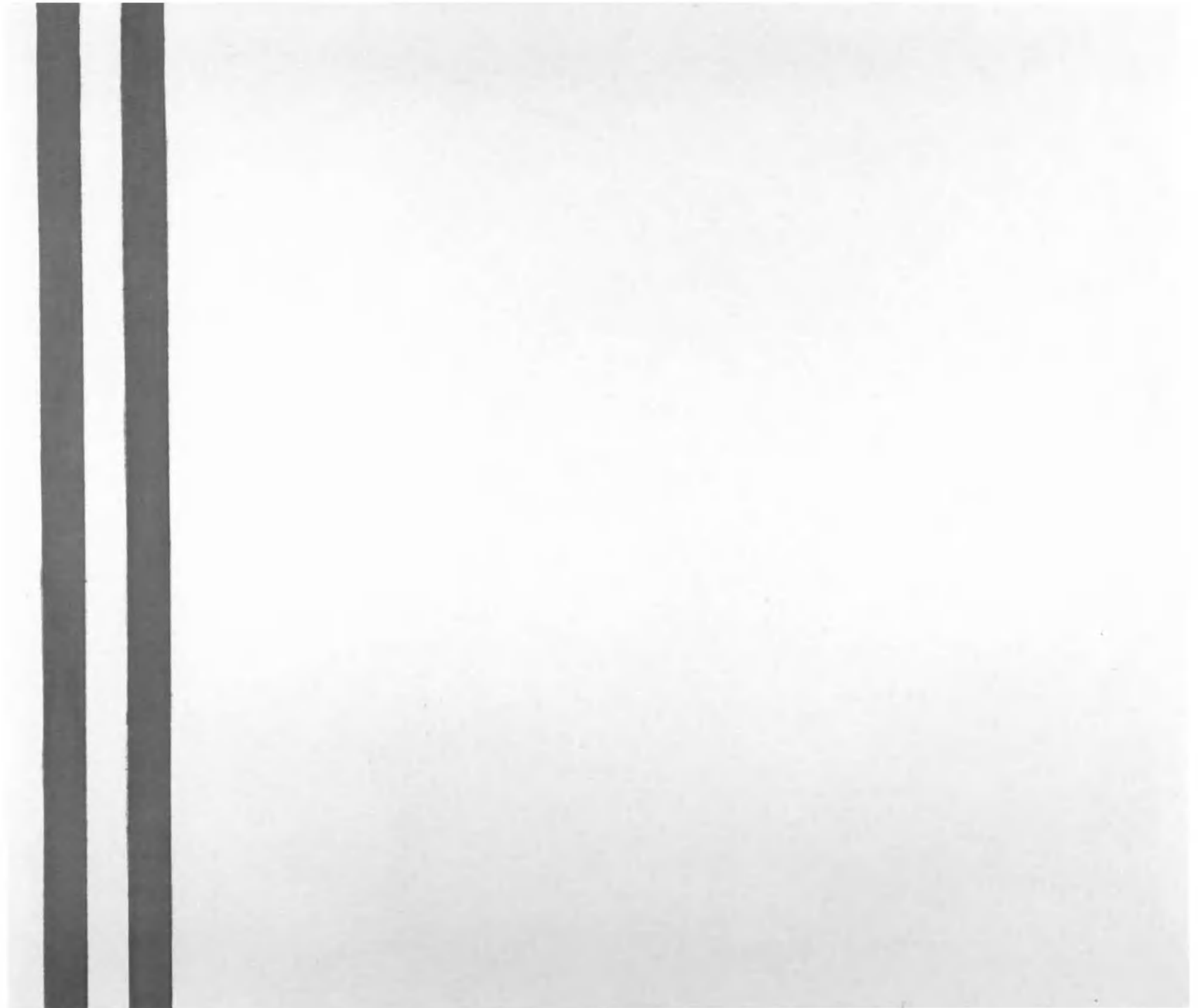
Oil on canvas; 72 × 84½ in.

(182.9 × 214.3 cm)

Gift of Annalee Newman, 1991 (1991.183)

A member of the New York School, Newman made many large canvases, including this one, a quintessential late work. At the far left two narrow, bright blue, vertical bands (or “zips,” as the artist called them) alternate between two white

vertical bands, all of equal size (six feet by three inches). To the right of the zips the remaining white space forms a six-foot square. This open area, intended not as a void but as a visual equivalent of the sublime, is full of meaning as well as light. Complexity, luminosity, and spirituality are hallmarks of Newman’s paintings. The artist himself said, “I paint out of high passion, and although my way of working may seem simple, for me it is difficult and complex.”





Georg Baselitz

German, born 1938

MAN OF FAITH, 1983

Oil on canvas; 97½ × 78 in.

(247.7 × 198.1 cm)

Gift of Barbara and Eugene Schwartz, in memory of Alice Schwartz, 1985 (1985.450.1)

Since 1969 the paintings of Georg Baselitz have depicted figures upside down. The artist intends to focus our immediate attention not on the narrative subject but on the process of painting itself—on the textural qualities of the oil medium, the vivid contrasts of color, and the violent, agitated brushwork. In *Man of Faith* Baselitz produces a simple, disturbing image on a grand scale (the canvas is over eight feet tall). A falling man, dressed in what appear to be clerical robes, is bent over in prayer. Is Baselitz making some reference to the apostle Peter, who was crucified upside down? The figure's fetuslike position is surrounded by a jagged halo of energized paint that heightens the sensation of rapid descent. The artist's coarse style of painting is equally stark and direct, and together subject and technique achieve what he has called "aggressive harmony."



Lucian Freud

British, born 1922

NAKED MAN, BACK VIEW, 1991–92

Oil on canvas, 72¼ × 54¼ in.

(183.5 × 137.5 cm)

Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 1993 (1993.71)

For almost half a century Lucian Freud has concentrated on depicting the human figure and face. This astonishing picture, among Freud's largest, portrays a subject frankly not beautiful. An enormous man, a broken giant, is posed in the artist's attic studio. Head shaven, he is nude, and with his back

turned he sits on a cloth-covered stool placed on a model's red-carpeted stand. The model is Leigh Bowery, a somewhat notorious London theatrical personality. With stark truthfulness the artist records the model's physical features, and his manipulation of paint to describe different textures is virtuosic. The rendition of flesh, here beaten by time and abuse, is extraordinary. Skin, the membrane that clothes the human form, is the essential subject of this still life. One is reminded of the terrifying single figures imagined by de Kooning, who once said, "Flesh is the reason why oil painting was developed."



Frank Lloyd Wright

American, 1867–1959

LIVING ROOM FROM THE
FRANCIS W. LITTLE HOUSE, 1912–14

Purchase, Emily Crane Chadbourne Bequest,
1972 (1972.60.1)

Frank Lloyd Wright was one of the most original and influential architects of the 20th century. The house from which this room

comes was built in Wayzata, Minnesota, and represents an extension of the architect's earlier Prairie Style houses, where he first developed his concept of total design for his interiors. Characteristically, the room has a strong architectural quality in its finishes and furnishings. A wonderful harmony is achieved in the combination of the ocher plaster walls, the natural oak flooring and trim, the golds and greens of the rug and

fabric on the upholstered furniture, and the electroplated copper finish of the leaded windows. The oak furniture was made in two groups; the darker oak pieces were original to the Little family's Peoria house, designed by Wright in 1902. The room's arrangement faithfully reflects Wright's plan. His antipathy for the eclecticism of Victorian interiors and his preference for Japanese aesthetics are also evident in the design.

Josef Hoffmann

Austrian (born Moravia), 1870–1956

BOWL, ca. 1920

Silver; H. 7½ in. (19.1 cm)

Gift of Jennifer Johnson Gregg, 1976

(1976.415)

Josef Hoffmann cofounded the Wiener Werkstätte in 1903 with the purpose of bringing together artists and craftsmen to raise the level of applied arts in Austria. The Wiener Werkstätte style followed an

independent course, changing from the rigorous geometry of early works to a baroque extravagance that proved popular in the 1920s. Hoffmann was affected by this decorative exuberance and abandoned the puritanical grids of his early work, but this bowl shows the master retaining his rational control of proportion. The surface shimmers, the handles loop in sweeping curves, and the base and lip are flared, but this is a subtle and refined piece.





Edward J. Steichen

American (born Luxembourg), 1879–1973

THE FLATIRON, 1904

Gum bichromate over platinum print (1909);
18 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (47.9 × 38.4 cm)

Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1933 (33.43.39)

The imposing height and dynamic shape of the Flatiron Building, constructed in 1902 on Madison Square, made it a favorite subject for photographers at the turn of the century. Edward Steichen's three large prints of *The Flatiron* in the Museum's collection, each a different color, together form the quintessential chromatic study of twilight in a modern urban setting. The moody, painterly effects of this photograph were achieved by adding color to a platinum print with layers of pigment suspended in a light-sensitive solution of gum arabic and potassium bichromate. Clearly indebted in its flattened composition to the Japanese woodcuts that were then in vogue, and in its coloristic effect to the *Nocturnes* of Whistler, this picture is a prime example of the efforts of photographers in the circle of Alfred Stieglitz to represent their experience of the world in ways that melded photography's verisimilitude with current artistic visions.



Brassai (Gyula Halász)

French (born Transylvania), 1899–1984

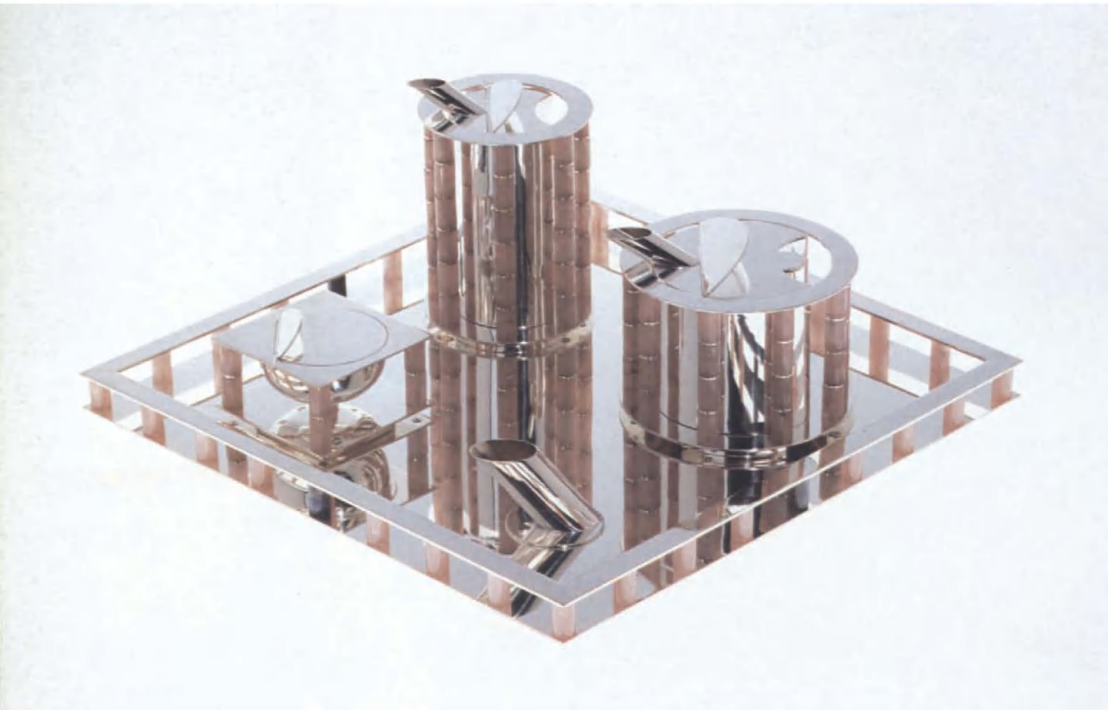
COUPLE D'AMOUREUX DANS UN
PETIT CAFÉ, QUARTIER ITALIE, 1932

Gelatin silver print, 1970; 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(28.3 × 22.7 cm)

Warner Communications Inc. Purchase
Fund, 1980 (1980.1023.5)

Born in Brasso, Transylvania, Gyula Halász took the name of his birthplace as a pseudonym in 1932, when he had lived in Paris for six years working as an illustrator and correspondent for Hungarian and German newspapers. In 1929, after

accompanying the expatriate Hungarian photographer André Kertész on assignment, Brassai decided to take up photography himself. In this photograph Brassai's compositional skill is evident in the way he has framed his subjects, each lover's gaze reflected in a mirror. Such artifice and formal elegance, rather than the harsh realities of photographic realism, was of supreme importance to him. Indeed, this and many of his photographs were staged, leading to a complicity between photographer and subject that adds to the picture's sophistication and playfulness.



Mario Bellini

Italian, born 1935

TEA AND COFFEE SERVICE (prototype), 1980

Cleto Munari (manufacturer)
Silverplate, rose quartz, and lapis lazuli;
coffee pot: H. 7½ in. (19.1 cm)
Gift of Cleto Munari, 1988,
(1988.191.6), Gift of Cleto Munari, 1990
(1990.96.1ab–4ab)

This service reveals Bellini's strong architectural background with all its elements reduced to minimal classical geometry. But the abstract severity is offset by the richness of the materials, and the overall effect is monumental.

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

American (born Germany), 1886–1969

"MR" ARMCHAIR, 1927

Chrome-plated steel and painted cane,
H. 31½ in. (80 cm)
Purchase, Theodore R. Gamble, Jr. Gift, in
honor of his mother, Mrs. Theodore Robert
Gamble, 1980 (1980.351)

Architect Mies van der Rohe's well-known philosophy of "less is more" is evident in this extremely graceful, elegant chair. His superb sense of proportion and his unerring instinct for what to leave out of a piece have made his furniture some of the most enduring of the 20th century.

Jacques Fath

French, 1912–1954

EVENING GOWN, 1947

Pink silk satin
Gift of Richard Martin, 1993 (1993.55)

French couturier Jacques Fath became famous in the post-World War II years for his beautifully articulated tailoring and extravagant evening wear. In 1947, the year of Christian Dior's New Look, Fath examined that silhouette's foundation, the waist-cinching corset, and externalized it. This elegant evening gown, which combines pink—a color of twentieth-century lingerie—with traditional lacing, exemplifies Fath's accomplishment. Its structure is a literal equivalent of the hourglass look of the late 1940s, here given deeper historical resonance.





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